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# Cowboy Artists of America
# 38th Annual Sale & Exhibition

Roy Anderson, *Speak, Little Wise One*, 2002. Oil on canvas, 48" x 56". © CAA.

Mark your calendar for the **Annual Cowboy Artists of America Sale & Exhibition at Phoenix Art Museum!** This art event is the premiere Western American art sale and exhibition in the country. Come and be a part of the action!

The Sale takes place on Friday, October 17, where over 130 never-before-seen paintings, drawings and sculptures by the members of Cowboy Artists of America will be exhibited for the first time. Also join us for a weekend of social and cultural activities.

The Sale is a ticketed event. For reservations, please call (602) 252-8382 or visit **www.caashow.com.** The Exhibition is open to the public.

## Cowboy Artists of America Members

**ARIZONA:** Joe Beeler* • Don Crowley • John Coleman Fred Fellows • Bill Nebeker • Bill Owen • James Reynolds R.S. Riddick • Ray Swanson **CALIFORNIA:** David Halbach Mehl Lawson **COLORADO:** Herb Mignery • Fritz White **TEXAS:** Roy Andersen • Wayne Baize • Bruce Greene Martin Grelle • Robert Pummill **MONTANA:** Gary Carter Loren Entz **NEW MEXICO:** Oreland C. Joe, Sr. • John Moyers Gary Niblett **UTAH:** Jim C. Norton **Founding Member*

**BACKGROUND:** R.S. Riddick, *Prairie Storm Coming* (Detail), 2002. Gouache on Arches paper, 25" x 38". © CAA.

## Sale: Friday, October 17, 2003
## Exhibition: Saturday, October 18 – November 16, 2003

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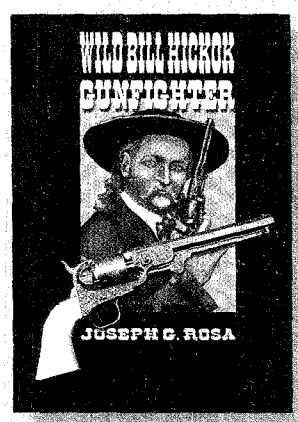
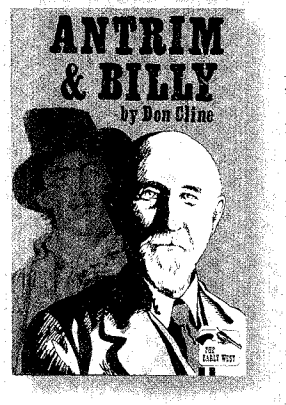
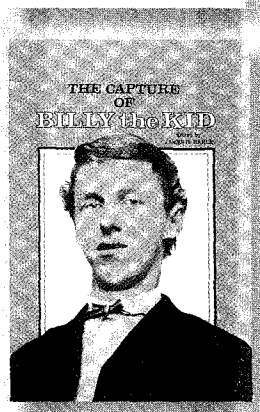



WILD BILL HICKOK: GUNFIGHTER by Joe Rosa. The first book to explore in detail and graphically analyze Hickok's gunfights, step by step. Learn of the guns that were used and how they were drawn; learn of the hand of aces and eights; learn of the rifle that was buried with him. A view of Hickok that you've never had before! 216 pages, 171 illus., notes, index, bibilio. SIGNED by Joseph Rosa. Hardcover with dustjacket $34.95 postage paid




ANTRIM & BILLY by Don Cline. Little has been written about William Antrim, the only father Billy the Kid ever knew. Read about Billy's upbringing and his relationship with his step father, much of it in Antrim's own words. New information is given on Joe Antrim, Billy's brother, who was known to be interviewed only once. 183 pages, 32 illustrations, index, notes, bibliography. Hardcover with dustjacket. $23.95 postage paid

I BURIED BILLY by Paco Anaya. I, the writer, and my brother, dressed Billy with these clothes and laid him on a high bed. There we watched, and on the next day we buried him. . . Paco Anaya. The manuscript was dictated by Paco to his son, Louis, in 1931 and it has remained in the family until now. It may be the last firsthand account about Billy the Kid that will ever be found. 160 pages, 55 illustrations. Hard cover with dustjacket. With an 11x17 color reproduction of the map of Fort Sumner drawn by Charley Foor. $23.95 postage paid.




THE CAPTURE OF BILLY THE KID Edited by James H. Earle. Cal Polk and Louis Bousman rode in Garrett's posse to Stinking Springs in pursuit of Billy the Kid on a snowy day in December of 1880. Polk and Bousman tell of the dramatic capture of the Kid in their own words. Versions of the capture from Charley Siringo, Jim East, and Pat Garrett are also given for comparison. All accounts are remarkably similar. 159 pages, 42 illustrations, index, bibliography. Hard cover with dustjacket. $28.95 postage paid.

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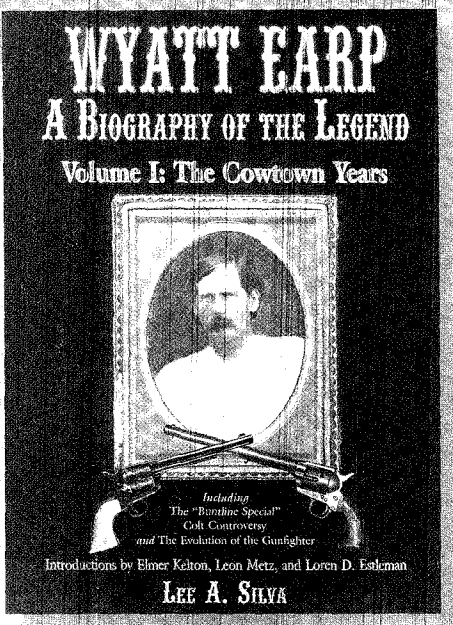


WYATT EARP: A Biography of the Legend, by Lee Silva. This Volume 1 of 4 planned volumes covers Wyatt's life from birth through the cowtown years at Dodge City, Abilene, and Ellsworth plus much more. Lee presents the various points of view concerning the happenings involving Wyatt and his friends and enemies. Read about the pros and cons on every issue of the participants–Doc, Virgil, Bat, Thompson, Buntline and the rest–on their guns, and on Hollywood's versions of the legend.

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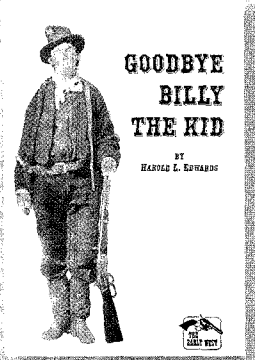
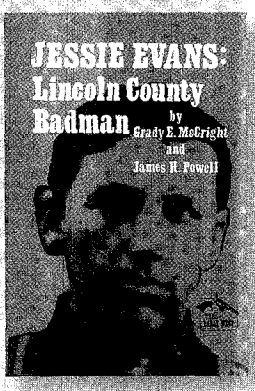
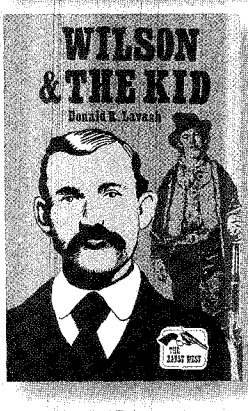



GOODBYE BILLY THE KID by Harold Edwards. "Quien es?" (Who is it?) At the same time backing away from me toward the door through which Garrett only a few seconds before had passed. –John Poe, Garrett's deputy. The Kid came into national prominence when he shot Deputies Bell and Olinger at the Lincoln Courthouse and casually rode out of town escaping his hanging. But the real legend began with his death at midnight on July 14, 1881. A brief overview of Billy's life is covered and numerous obituaries published at his death are included. 168 pages, 41 illus. Hardcover with dustjacket. $23.95 post paid.




JESSIE EVANS: Lincoln County Badman, by McCright and Powell. When the Kid and Jessie faced each other in the street at Lincoln, Jessie yelled that it would be impossible for him to deal with Billy, and he was in favor of shooting it out then and there. Being acquaninted with Jessie, the Kid declined the challenge and made no move for his gun. Read about this mysterious gunfighter who was probably the killer of John Tunstall. 240 pages, 51 illus. Hardcover with dustjacket. $25.95 postage paid




WILSON & THE KID by Don Lavash. Billy Wilson was with Billy the Kid when they were captured at Stinking Springs in December of 1880 by Pat Garrett and his posse. A few months later the Kid was killed by Garrett, but Wilson escaped and began a new life. This story of Wilson sheds new light on the Kid and the Lincoln County War through the work of a noted New Mexico historian. 182 pages, 46 illustration, notes, bibliography, index. Hardback, dustjacket. $23.95 postage paid

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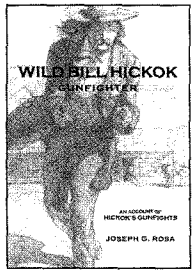


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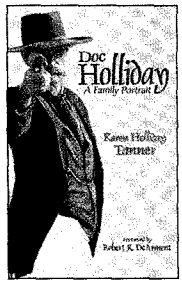


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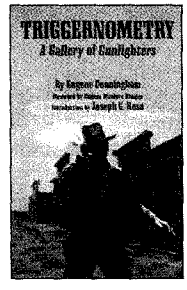


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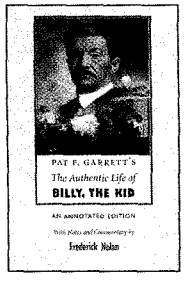


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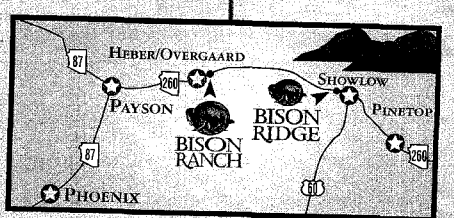


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OCTOBER 2003 • VOLUME 50 • ISSUE 8

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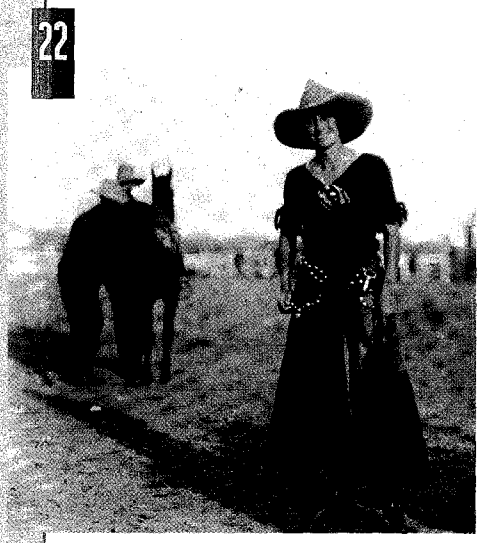


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*— Candy Moulton*

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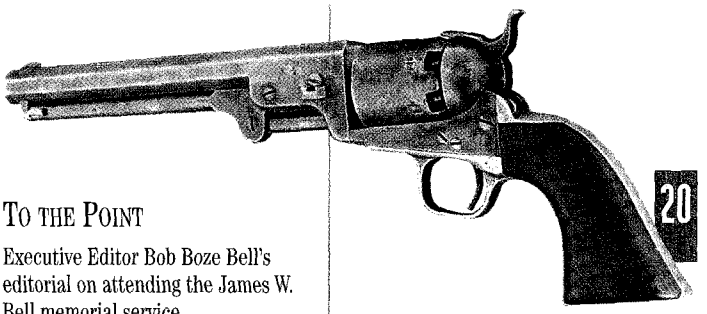


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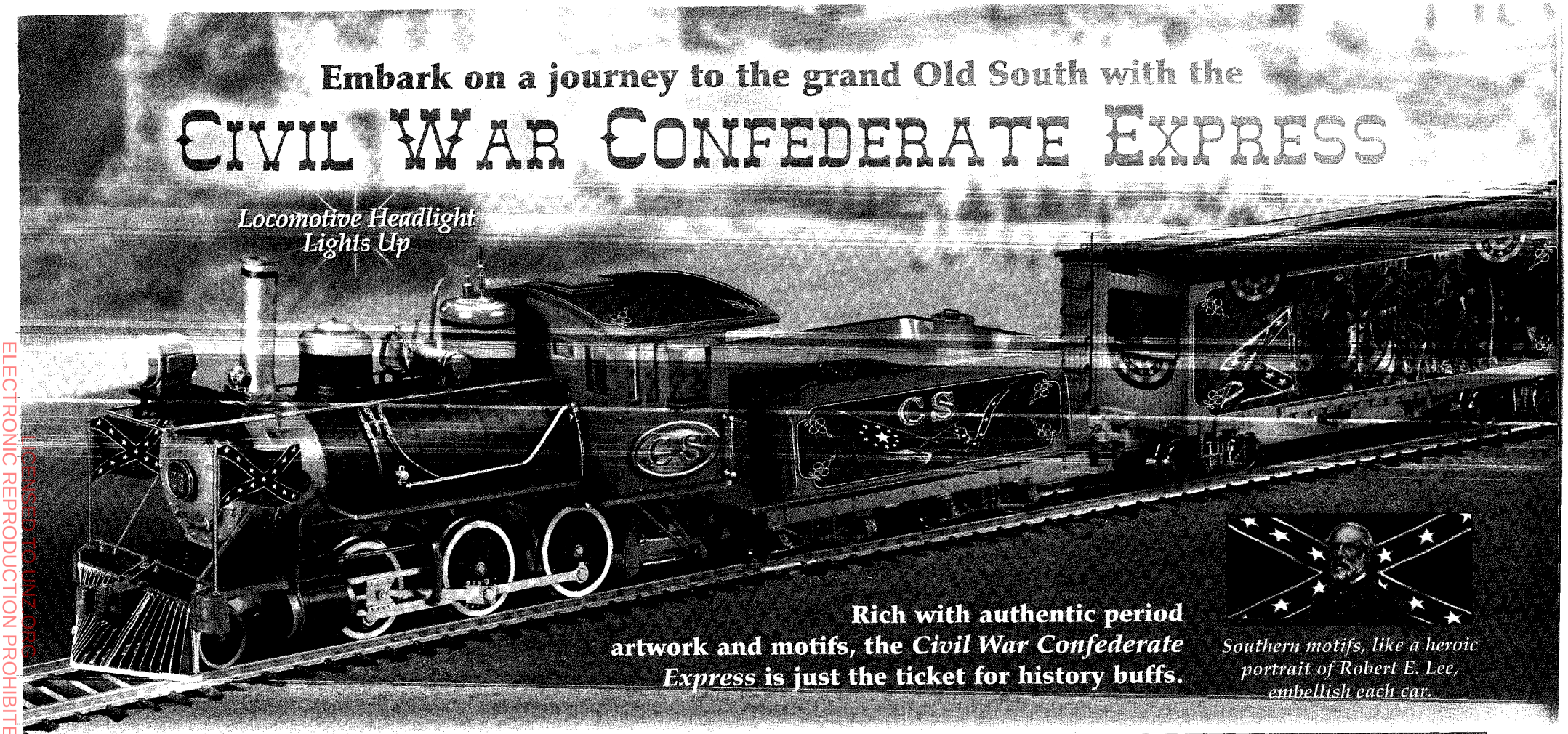


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Signature

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# Book 'em, Bozo!

*Skeletons galore.*

Not long after I discovered *True West* in 1957, I learned one of the two guards **Billy the Kid** had killed during an 1881 jailbreak was named Bell. I immediately ran into the living room and queried my dad: "Did Billy the Kid kill one of our relatives?" My father said he didn't think so unless the Kid went on a killing spree in Northern Iowa. In my mind's eye, I pictured Billy gunning down a Norwegian farmer asking for a third helping of lutefisk—justifiable homicide in Iowa. I was so proud. So it was with a bit of awkward anticipation that I attended a memorial service for **James W. Bell** this past July (p. 50).

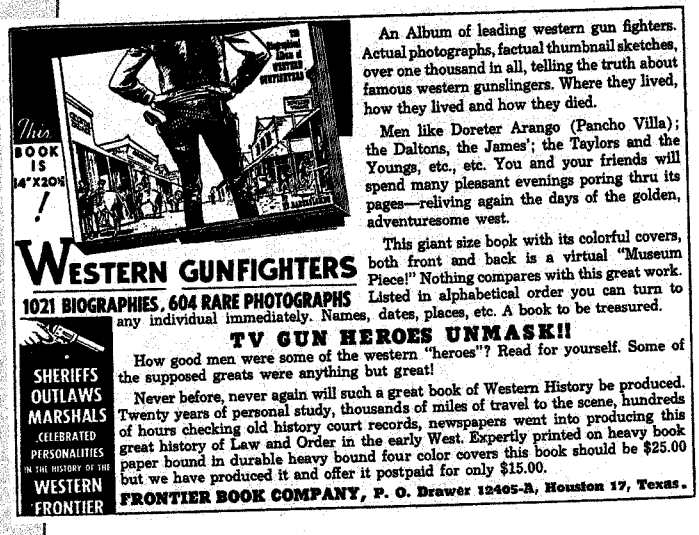
*The name J.W. Bell kindled my interest in Billy (above).*

– ALL ILLUSTRATIONS BY BOB BOZE BELL –

■ In 1959, I worked all summer in my father's gas station (Al Bell's Flying A on Route 66 in Kingman, Arizona) to save enough money to buy **Ed Bartholomew's** *Biographical Album of Western Gunfighters*. I saw the book advertisement in *True West* (below). That September, I smashed my piggy bank, sent in the order and counted the days until the big book arrived. I wasn't disappointed. Virtually all of the books I've written, such as *The Illustrated Life & Times of Wyatt Earp*, are a direct result of trying to emulate Bartholomew's book. And although his seminal book didn't make our final list of "The 50 Greatest Books on the American West" (p. 33), you can rest assured it was at the top of my list.

*The ad for Bartholomew's book that hooked a 13-year-old kid.*

– TRUE WEST ARCHIVES –




■ In 1977, I visited **The Cowboy Hall of Fame** in Oklahoma City and was knocked out by photos of early rodeo women. The cowgirls' big hats and fancy duds had a huge impact on me. Several months later, I was assigned to do a six-page comic strip for *National Lampoon*, so I came up with a character I dubbed **Honkytonk Sue**. Stealing the hat style, attitude and retro look of the cowgirls, I was off to the races. Fast forward to 2001 and the **Desert Caballeros Museum** in Wickenburg, Arizona, where I was giving a talk on **Wyatt Earp** and Billy the Kid. Afterwards, a woman approached me and asked, "Do you know who **Vera McGinnis** is?" I replied, "I sure do. She was the prettiest and fastest ridin' cowgirl the West ever produced." The woman smiled and said, "Well, I'm her grandniece and I have all her original photographs."

*Honkytonk Sue: The Queen of Country Swing.*

Not long after that fateful encounter, **Phyllis Gendreau** came into my office with several boxes full of scrapbooks and photos. The collection is absolutely stunning. The end result of our encounter is **Jana Bommersbach's** wonderful tribute to Vera (p. 22). Further chapters in the amazing life of this American original will continue into 2004.

### Western Quote

*"A good writer of history is a guy who is suspicious. Suspicion marks the real difference between the man who wants to write honest history and the one who'd rather write a good story."*

—Jim Bishop

*For a behind-the-scenes look at running this magazine, check out BBB's daily journal at truewestmagazine.com*



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# SHOOTING BACK

*True West readers speak out.*

***The Palo Duro Band of Amarillo plays throughout Texas, including at the monthly breakfasts hosted by the Southwest Cowboy Poets Association. From left to right, Teresa Zimmerman plays the fiddle, Cody Anderson, bass and Jim Anderson, guitar.***

– COURTESY JIM R. ANDERSON –

Thought you would like to know of an actual occasion when a poet helped a town. I'm so proud cowboy poetry was among the reasons why Amarillo is one of the best Western towns (Travel Annual 2003). Around 1986, Jake Holster and I organized cowboy poetry groups, soon after the Amarillo Civic Center started "Old West Days." We began heading up monthly breakfasts at the Big Texan and ran a monthly Cowboy Poetry program at Barnes & Noble bookstores. The Southwest Cowboy Poets Association was formally established in 1994.

MARIANNE MCNEIL LOGAN
AMARILLO, TX

## What Does "Mary-Ann" Mean?

In doing research on Civil War-era slang, I came across a reference that the term "Mary-Ann" meant sissy and may have originated as jailhouse slang for a homosexual (like the modern "chickenhawk"). If Buckshot Roberts used the term during the Blazer's Mill confrontation (*Classic Gunfights*, April 2003), it may well explain Charlie Bowdre's .44 caliber rebuttal.

BRIAN ALLISON
NASHVILLE, TN

## Top 10 John Wayne Movies

I must question your selections in "John Wayne's 10 Best Westerns" (*Westerns*, April 2003). I can understand omitting my personal favorite, *Big Jake*, because Westerns were on the decline at that point in movie history. I fail to understand how you could possibly overlook *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance*. This outstanding Western is recognized by most Western fans as one of the greatest of all time. I can only conclude that when you revisit your choices, it will give you another reason to put John Wayne on your cover.

RANDY MCCOY
CRAIGIE, AUSTRALIA

## Wiping Bums in Western Movies

The letter in *Ask the Marshall* (May/June 2003) saying we never see how people wiped their bottoms in Western movies is not quite true. In the 1972 film *The Culpepper Cattle Company*, Gary Grimes plays an apprentice cowboy. During a toilet stop, he's seen breaking leaves as he unbuckles his trousers. I tried it once in our back garden, but unfortunately, I came out in a nasty rash. My mother thought it might have been poison ivy or a wasp, but either way, I should have known better because the Duke or Randolph Scott never did it.

GEOFF FANNING
BLUE MOUNTAINS, AUSTRALIA

## John Clum & Wyatt Earp

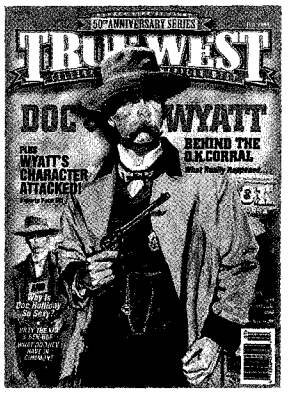
The photo, supposedly of John Clum & Wyatt Earp (p. 30, July 2003), was reportedly taken in 1907-08 in a Los Angeles newspaper office. I am not convinced that the men are actually Clum and Earp. John Clum wasn't residing in Los Angeles in 1907 or 1908. Clum was postmaster of Fairbanks, Alaska, in August 1906, and he, his wife Belle and their daughter Caro remained there until June 1909.

NEIL CARMONY
TUCSON, AZ

## World's Oldest Rodeo

On July 4, 1869, Colorado's Deer Trail rodeo was held some 19 years prior to the Prescott event ("The World's Oldest Rodeo," July 2003). The winner of the first rodeo was an Englishman named Emilnie Gardenshire, a Mill Iron cowboy, who was proclaimed the Champion Bronco Buster of the Plains. The rodeo was closed during 1938-43, but has been a yearly event ever since. Prescott, Arizona, may have the longest continuous rodeo in the world, but Deer Trail, Colorado, holds the distinction of being the first.

BOB SULLIVAN
DENVER, CO




## Wyatt Earp Pimp Debate

I am going to go with Allen Barra's argument (p. 39, July 2003). Wyatt being arrested, charged and fined in Peoria, Illinois, does not mean he was a pimp. He could have been a bouncer or a hired gun. As to the woman taking his name? Just maybe her name was Earp.

GEORGE M. GOLDRING
TOPEKA, KS



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**Check out our Old West Quizzes at www.truewestmagazine.com**

Allen Barra makes the inference that Wyatt Earp was a "border" not a "john." Who's kidding who? Wyatt in a brothel would have the same tempting effect as an old lady in the produce section of the supermarket . . . likely a lot of sniffing, poking, squeezing and thumping of the melons. Hey Allen, wake up and smell the coffee!

JANICE RAE
LACRESCENT, MN

## Wyatt Earp: the Man, Not the Myth

Bob Boze Bell seems to have almost a psychotic hatred for Wyatt Earp. What is it with this guy?

LEE FORNEY
SAN MATEO, CA

***Bob Boze Bell responds:*** *I feel your pain, but if the title of my article was "50 Things You All Know about Wyatt Earp," then you would have read all about Earp's brave and courageous life. To borrow and bend a Huxley quote: "The great tragedy of popular history is the slaying of a beautiful folk hero by an ugly fact." In this case, there were about 50.*

**Corrections**

- *Cherokee Bill's name (p. 100, July 2003) was Crawford Goldsby, not Crosby.*
- *The "Outward Bound" map (p. 22, July 2003) reverses the paths of Ike and Billy Clanton. Ike Clanton's path should be in red and Billy's should be in blue.*
- *Wyatt Earp was 20 in 1868 and 26 in 1874 (p. 30, July 2003).*
- *Butch and Sundance died in 1908 (p. 40, Aug/Sept 2003).*

**We Welcome Your Comments**

***"Now let the letters roll in and bare your very soul. That is what has always kept us going and I think it always will." —Joe Small, True West founder.***

*Send your letters to Editor, PO Box 8008, Cave Creek, AZ 85327. Email: editor@truewestmagazine.com*

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# EXPERIENCE THE OLD WEST

## SEPTEMBER

4-7, Lubbock, TX, **15th Annual National Cowboy Symposium and Celebration:** Explore American frontier traditions. Highlights include the American Cowboy Culture Awards Show, a chuck wagon cook-off and over 100 Western performers, poets and scholars. **Information:** 806-795-2455

18-21, Morristown, MN, **Gunsmoke '03:** The Cedar Valley Vigilantes present the "SASS Minnesota State Championship." **Information:** 507-838-7334

19-21, Sioux Falls, SD, **2nd Annual Spirit of the West Festival:** Three days of Western singers, poets and cavalry re-enactments. **Information:** 605-334-9202 or www.spiritofthewestfestival.com

20, Ruidoso Downs, NM, **The Capture and Death of Billy the Kid:** Lecture by Herb Marsh, past president of the Lincoln County Historical Society. The lecture series accompanies the Gunfighter exhibit at the Hubbard Museum of the American West. **Information:** 505-378-4142 or www.hubbardmuseum.com

26-27, Cody, WY, **Buffalo Bill Art Show and Sale:** Over 100 contemporary artists exhibit their latest work. **Information:** 307-587-5002 or www.buffalobillartshow.com

27-28, Antonito, CO, **Nick's Wild West Show:** Gunfights, brawls, re-enactments, chuck wagon food, horsemanship clinics, a trader's row and cowboy and Indian music are just a few of the things scheduled for this event. **Information:** 303-679-6019 or 719-376-6141

## OCTOBER

1-5, St. Joseph, MO; 25-26, Kansas City, MO; 29-Nov. 2, Peoria, IL, **The Great American Wild West Show:** Celebrate the American West during this Legends of the West tour. **Information:** 870-668-3122 or www.greatamericanwildwestshow.com

*The spirit of the Old West comes alive during San Bernardino's Harvest Fair.*

– COURTESY HARVEST FAIR –

**NOVEMBER 1-2 & 8-9**
San Bernardino, California
**Harvest Fair**
Take a trip back to the Old West. This fair has live country music, Old West shows, cowboy camps, sutlers and crafts, chuck wagon food, a mariachi band and folklorico dancers. **Information:** 909-384-5426 or www.harvestfair.net

11-July 4, 2004, Los Angeles, CA, **Glorious Treasures: 100 Years of Collecting by the Southwest Museum:** Included are objects collected since the Southwest Society's initial acquisitions in 1904, many Southwestern archaeological items and art by Maynard Dixon, Joseph Henry Sharp and John Woodhouse Audubon. **Information:** 323-667-2000 or www.autry-museum.org

17-Nov. 16, Phoenix, AZ, **Cowboy Artists of America 38th Annual Sale & Exhibition:** The premier Western American art sale and exhibition in the country. The sale takes place Friday, October 17 and features over 130 never-before-seen paintings, drawings and sculptures by members of Cowboy Artists of America. **Information:** 602-257-1222 or www.phxart.org

17-19, Tombstone, AZ, **Helldorado Days:** Tombstone's oldest tradition includes re-enactments, a parade, fashion shows, live music, street entertainment, food and Tombstone Vigilettes' Variety Night. **Information:** 520-457-3197

24-25, Kerrville, TX, **Silver Stars & Six Guns 2003:** This year's event is dedicated to the memory of Capt. Samuel Walker and includes golf, a Brunch and Trunk Show, auctions, dinner, Texas Ranger memorabilia and former and current Rangers. **Information:** 830-895-2262

25, San Antonio, TX, **First Buckhorn Western Collectibles Show:** Buy, sell, trade or just look as Kurt House and the Buckhorn Saloon present 70 tables of Western artifacts and collectibles, including firearms, spurs, photography, Western art, books and more. A chuck wagon dinner is also available. **Information:** 210-247-4000 or www.buckhornmuseum.com

25, Los Angeles, CA, **Autry Western Music and Cowboy Poetry Gathering:** Celebrate Western traditions with a day of roping, music, poetry and crafts. The Wells Fargo Theatre will showcase 30 acts from across the nation, including Johnny Western, Belinda Gail and Andy Hedges. **Information:** 323-667-2000 or www.autry-museum.org

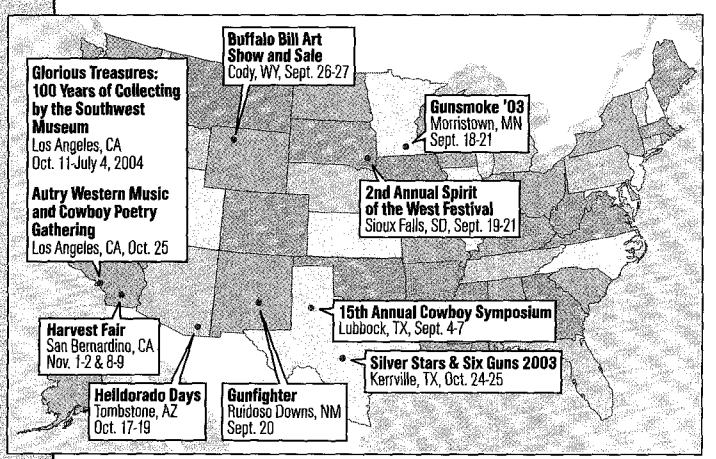
25-26, Shakespeare, NM, **Shakespeare Ghost Town:** Relive the Old West through living history tours and re-enactments at this national historic site south of Lordsburg. **Information:** 505-542-9034

## NOVEMBER

6-9, Tucson, AZ, **Tucson Cowboy Music Roundup:** Four days of cowboy poetry and music, Western wear vendors, memorabilia and cowboy church. **Information:** 520-743-9328 or www.homeranchhands.org

7-9, Dallas, TX, **2003 Texas Stampede:** Experience the world of the cowboy through the new ProRodeo Championship Finale. Contestants compete for a total of $500,000 in seven events. **Information:** 877-210-5425

15-16, Phoenix, AZ, **Second Annual Heard Museum Spanish Market:** See and purchase arts and crafts from more than 70 New Mexico and Arizona artists as the museum is transformed into an outdoor marketplace. **Information:** 602-251-0255 or www.heard.org/spanishmarket.php




Submissions to Western Roundup are welcome. Please send all information and photos at least three months in advance to Western Roundup, P.O. Box 8008, Cave Creek, AZ 85327; info@truewestmagazine.com or fax it to 480-575-1903.



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*(Below) Navajo classic Chief's blanket, borderless in second phase pattern with piano key stripes on central and end panels; approximately 4 feet 8 inches by 5 feet 8 inches; $30,000. By the 1850s, weaving innovations introduced a second phase blanket with elongated rectangles that interrupted and expanded the blanket's center and end stripes.*

*(Left) Navajo late classic Chief's blanket, third phase example, borderless weaving with nine-spot pattern of concentric sawtooth diamonds, a series of fine stripes in contrasting colors across the center and ends; approximately 4 feet 8 inches by 5 feet 10 inches; $6,462.50. In the 1860s, the style shifted from rectangles and squares to diamonds.*

## Upcoming Auctions

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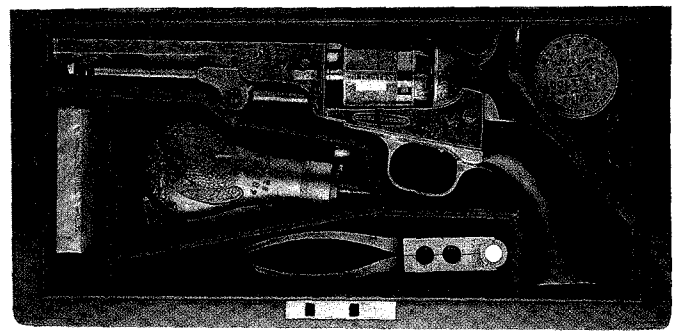
**October 29**
California, Western & American Paintings, Drawings & Sculpture
Christie's Los Angeles
www.christies.com

# Gold Inlaid Colt Sets World Record Price

*Greg Martin raises the bar.*



*The pocket revolver is in a rosewood case, with (from left to right) a packet of skin cartridges made by Colt's Cartridge Works using Col. Hazard's gunpowder; an American eagle-decorated revolver powder flask; an L-shaped screwdriver/nipple wrench (beneath the flask); an embossed COLTS/PATENT brass bullet mold with special arched shape (like that of the Model 1855 brass bullet molds); a lacquered can of Eley Bros. No. 10 percussion caps; and a key.*

– Courtesy Greg Martin Auctions –

Out of the million percussion firearms produced by Samuel Colt, only 24 gold inlaid examples are known to exist. Believed to be one of the first projects for Colt by America's master engraver, Gustave Young, a cased gold inlaid Colt Model 1849 pocket revolver (above) sold for a $740,000 bid at Greg Martin's June 16, 2003, auction in San Francisco, California.

"It is the highest price ever paid for a single revolver at auction," Greg Martin said.

The gold inlaid Colt beat out a cased Colt Paterson Belt Model Revolver, Colt's first revolving gun, which hammered in last year at $661,750 at Bonhams' auction in San Francisco, with Greg Martin as department head.

To promote his firearms, Samuel Colt featured specially cased and embellished pieces in his displays at fairs and exhibitions, most famously at the London Great Exhibition of 1851, the New York City Crystal Palace Exhibition of 1853 and the Paris Exhibition of 1855.

Young's fine embellishments make this pocket revolver a rare and landmark firearm. The revolver's .31 caliber, five-shot cylinder is engraved with a stagecoach holdup roll scene; the five-inch barrel is gold inlaid with "Saml Colt" in Old English letters; and animal and bird motifs are accentuated with elaborate, intertwined scrolls. The coverage is so extensive, engravings decorate the bottom angle flat of the barrel, which wasn't usually embellished on other engraved Colt revolvers of the period. Another rarity, the backstrap and triggerguard strap are gold-plated, of the heavy quality, which is not often seen on Colt's gold inlaid percussion revolvers.

In the 19th century, American firearm engraving was a high art form, as an engraver had to draw his design freehand on a metal surface before cutting into the hardened steel by chasing—striking the engraving tool with a hammer, instead of using hand pressure. The scroll patterns were drawn with a line pencil. In this handgun, Colt merged Old World handcrafted gold inlaying and engraving with New World machine precision.

**—Meghan Saar**



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Sunday, Sept. 28
10:00 am - 4:00 pm

## JURIED ART SHOW

Friday, Sept. 26
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8:30 pm - 10:00 pm market

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BY PHIL SPANGENBERGER

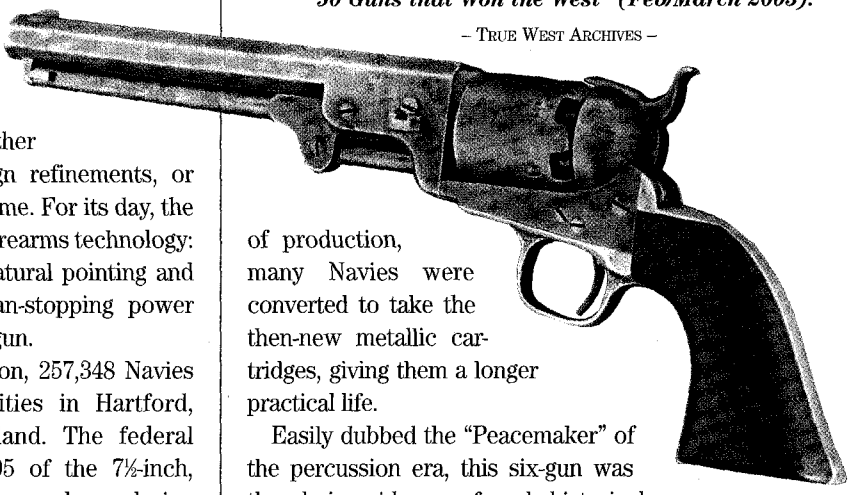
# The Percussion "Peacemaker"

*Still popular after 150 years.*

If ever a gun were to be considered a classic, certainly the 1851 Navy Colt would rate at the top of anyone's list. This caplock six-shooter may be the first truly practical revolver, since the Colts that preceded it were either lacking in ergonomics and design refinements, or were simply too big and cumbersome. For its day, the '51 Navy represented the peak of firearms technology: light weight, excellent balance, natural pointing and handling characteristics, and man-stopping power were all found in Colt's one-hand gun.

During its 23 years of production, 257,348 Navies were turned out by Colt facilities in Hartford, Connecticut, and London, England. The federal government purchased only 3,005 of the 7½-inch, octagon barreled, American-made revolvers during the Civil War. A great many more were bought privately and used during the conflict as the streamlined cap-and-ball revolver was highly valued by Confederate soldiers fortunate enough to capture one from their Northern foes. The Confederacy actually produced copies of the Colt for its troops, and an engraved Colt '51 Navy was the personal sidearm of none other than Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee.

Actually introduced in 1850 and produced until 1873, the Model 1851 Navy Colt reigned as a favorite fighting handgun among knowledgeable pistoleers. Even though Colt introduced the Single Action Army revolver in the Navy model's final year of production, many Navies were converted to take the then-new metallic cartridges, giving them a longer practical life.



***The 1851 Colt Navy revolver was picked as the 11th most important firearm in* True West's *recent feature "50 Guns that Won the West" (Feb/March 2003).***

– TRUE WEST ARCHIVES –

Easily dubbed the "Peacemaker" of the percussion era, this six-gun was the choice sidearm of such historical figures as James Butler "Wild Bill" Hickok, often called the "Prince of Pistoleers," as well as many of his gun-savvy contemporaries, such as John Wesley Hardin, the James-Younger Gang, the Pinkertons, many U.S. dragoons of the pre-Civil War years, a number of Pawnee scouts and frontiersman Maj. Frank North.

In its early years, the Navy Colt was prized by Argonauts flocking to the California goldfields, and later, it saw use in the Australian Outback. The Navy was also packed by government forces in Austria, Canada and England. Navy Colts were highly used during the Crimean War (1854-56): a number of British sailors were issued .36 caliber Colts, and at the Battle of Balaklava, Navy Colts thundered into the valley of death during Great Britain's ill-fated, but legendary, Charge of the Light Brigade.

Even in modern times, the Navy's fame lives on. Perhaps no greater testimony to the historical status of this mid-19th-century revolver can be given than when in the late 1950s, modern black powder pioneer Val Forgett selected a Confederate copy of the 1851 Navy to introduce the first replica Civil War-type firearms for 20th-century shooters. Today, the '51 Navy Colt is perhaps the most replicated black powder handgun in the world. Among firearms enthusiasts, it is considered by many to be the archetypical percussion revolver.

***Wild Bill Hickok often carried his '51 Navies in his belt rather than in holsters, as shown at left.***

– COURTESY ROBERT G. MCCUBBIN –

***Phil***



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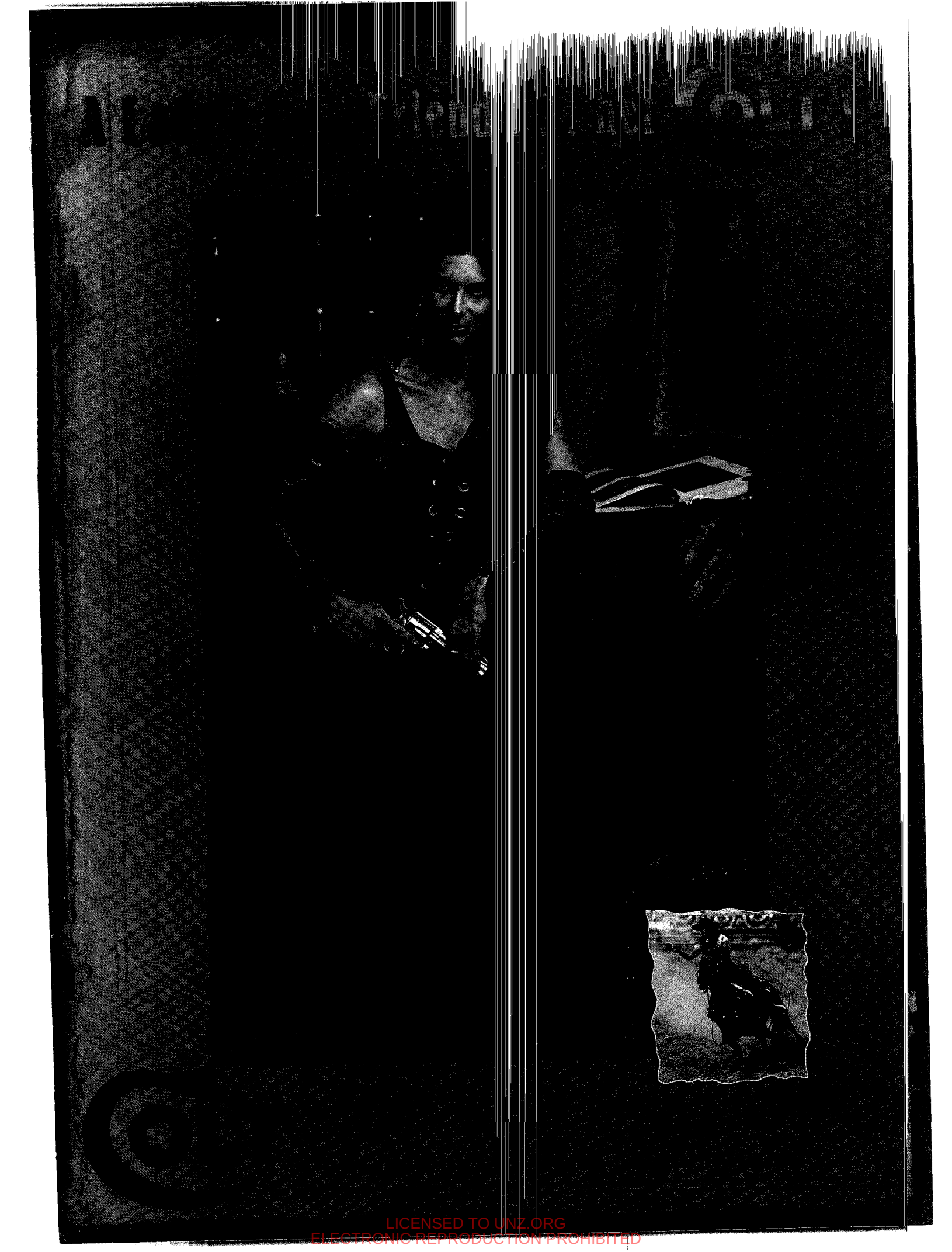

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BY JANA BOMMERSBACH

# The most daring cowgirl who ever rode the West.

# Vera McGinnis

*Yes, that's a great big smile on the face of Vera McGinnis as she shows off her trick riding talents on a galloping horse. She learned to trick ride in just days because she wanted a gorgeous saddle offered as the 4th place prize at the Winnipeg Stampede in 1913. She never got it—she tied for second place instead—but went on to win trophies around the world.*

– ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF VERA MCGINNIS' GRANDNIECE PHYLLIS GENDREAU –

She hardly even tried to describe the pain, but of course, how could she? What words are there to recount a ton of horseflesh landing on your tiny body, doing colossal damage: breaking your back in five places, busting three ribs, destroying a hip, shattering a collarbone, puncturing a lung.

On her way to becoming America's premier woman rodeo champion, Vera McGinnis had been thrown before, stepped on before and dragged before, but even injuries permanent enough to require changes in her trick-riding act were nothing like this.

Years later when she wrote her autobiography, Vera devoted

## BUILDING THE AMERICAN WEST

**1921**
The Snyder Act grants responsibility for Indian social and medical services to the Department of the Interior.

**June 2, 1924**
Congress passes a law making all of the nation's Indians citizens.

**August 16, 1924**
The last of the Bill Doolin Gang, Arkansas Tom, is shot dead.

*Lindbergh's Spirit of St. Louis.*

**July 21, 1925**
John T. Scopes is found guilty of teaching evolution in Tennessee and is fined $100.

**March 16, 1926**
Dr. Robert H. Goddard launches the world's first successful liquid-fueled rocket, which travels 184 feet in 2.5 seconds.

**May 21, 1927**
Charles A. Lindbergh lands at Le Bourget airfield near Paris, France, having completed the first nonstop trans-Atlantic flight.

**October 6, 1927**
"Talking movies" arrive when *The Jazz Singer*, staring Al Jolson, opens in New York.

**1928**
U.S. Senator and Kaw Indian Charles Curtis is elected vice president under Herbert Hoover.

*Many sold nickel apples during the Great Depression.*

**October 29, 1929**
Stocks crash on Wall Street.

**1930**
Hoping the movie *The Big Trail* will make him a star, John Wayne sees his career plummet after the film fails at the box office. Smoot-Hawley Tariff is signed into law, helping to send the U.S. into a worldwide depression.

**1931**
*Cimarron* proves a box office success, winning an Oscar for best film. Wonder dog Rin Tin Tin makes his last movie, *Lightning Warrior*.

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just a couple of pages to that day in 1934 when her trick pony Rosie somersaulted on top of her during a relay race. Nor does she dwell on the callous treatment she got in two hospitals—one pawning her off on the other, neither giving any medical care because she was poor, had no insurance and surely was dying anyway.

You can't blame her. How could she bear to remember people who cared so little about a broken human being? But she does write how surprised she was when a doctor told her she probably wouldn't make it.

"I won't die," she told him.

Then you'll end up a cripple, he said.

"No, I won't be that either."

She didn't die and didn't end up a cripple, but you have to imagine, at that moment, 42-year-old Vera McGinnis knew her days in the rodeo ring were over.

It had been a 21-year ride and she'd forever have the gorgeous trophies won around the world and the mountain of newspaper clippings attesting to a prowess in the ring that made her "the girl to beat." But the year that should have been the pinnacle of her career, turned out to be the end.

There's certainly no way to relate what that kind of hurt feels like. And so Vera McGinnis, one of America's pioneer cowgirls, kept it to herself.

IT HAD TO BE in her genes, or else how did Vera McGinnis do so many remarkable things:

- Jumped an irrigation canal on a "four-legged, crop-eared babysitting burro" named Croppie in 1895 when she was just three years old—a moment she recalled as "rodeo germ's first nudge."
- Won the very first riding competition she ever entered at age 13, taking home a gold-handled umbrella "which I needed like four legs."
- Learned to trick ride in just eight days in 1913 with such skill, on her first time out, she tied reigning trick-riding queen Tillie Baldwin.
- Ran the clock her first time on a bronc and her first time on a raging bull.
- Invented the "flying change"—getting from one horse to another without touching the ground—and was one of the few, man or woman, to circle a horse's belly at full gallop.
- Was the nation's only "girl jockey," competing and often winning in the "Sport of Kings" against the men.
- Won titles, trophies and prize money on three continents, appearing in more countries than any other cowgirl and earning the reputation as the girl who "rode the fastest and dared the most."
- Singlehandedly changed the fashion of the rodeo ring, as she was the first woman performer who dared to wear pants.
- Appeared as a Hollywood stunt double and was given a short film series until it became apparent her talent didn't match her beauty. (In *The Cimarron Land Rush*, she doubles for Estelle Taylor and is the only woman in the runaway scene, since all the others are men in wigs and dresses.)
- Published her autobiography, *Rodeo Road: My Life as a Pioneer Cowgirl* in 1974, which was hailed as "one of the most authentic books ever published about the sport—a must read for anyone interested in rodeo history."
- Inducted into the Cowgirl Hall of Fame in 1979 (and to this day, she's one of their favorite icons), and inducted into the Rodeo Hall of Fame in 1985.

## She dared to wear pants.

*Vera at 18, already a beauty and already a girl who didn't fit the Victorian mold of the day. Although she wore her corset in her first relay race, that was a mistake she never made again, as she went on to change rodeo fashion forever.*

Vera McGinnis began this incredible journey at a time when women didn't even wear pants around the house; when they wouldn't be seen in public without their corset; when they didn't have the right to vote and couldn't serve on juries. It was a time when professional opportunities for women were greatly limited: the few working outside the home made barely half as much as men. It was a time of strict codes and taboos, when women who displayed "masculine tastes"—like competing in men's sports —were considered "sexual inverts."

And yet, Vera and her fellow buckaroos overcame all those restrictions and stereotypes to make their way in the

## 1921 - 1940

*Cimarron was a box-office success.*

**1932**
Tom Mix makes his first talkie, *Destry Rides Again.*

**March 9-June16, 1933**
Congress passes President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal legislation to help stem the Great Depression.

**May 1, 1931**
Empire State Building opens in New York City.

**October 17, 1931**
Chicago mobster Al Capone is convicted of tax evasion.

**December 5, 1933**
Prohibition ends.

**1935**
William Boyd makes *Hop-a-Long Cassidy*, the first film in this long-running Western series. Serial film *The Phantom Empire* establishes Gene Autry as the top singing cowboy in B-Westerns.

**August 15, 1935**
Cowboy comedian Will Rogers dies in an Alaskan plane crash.

**1936**
Boulder Dam (now Hoover Dam) begins operation. Margaret Mitchell's *Gone With the Wind* is published.

**1939**
*Stagecoach* boosts John Wayne's acting career, lifting it from the realm of the B-Western.

*The movie that made John Wayne a star.*

**August 2, 1939**
Albert Einstein sends a letter to President Roosevelt, warning him it's possible to make an atomic bomb.

**October 23, 1939**
Western novelist Zane Grey dies in Altadena, California.

**September 14, 1940**
U.S. begins its first peacetime draft.

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*Earl Simpson and Vera on their wedding day in 1914: he was a handsome devil, great with horses, not so great at making a living or a home for a wife, and although she said it broke her heart when they split up, she did fine without him for decades after.*

rough and wild world of rodeos. As she began her career, over 200 women earned a living in rodeos or Wild West shows—about the best paying job open to women. Stars such as Mabel Strickland, Kitty Canutt, Prairie Rose Henderson, Fox Hastings, Tad Lucas, Ruth Roach and Florence Hughes Randolph left their mark forever.

Vera McGinnis and these rodeo pioneers were America's first professional women athletes.

YES, IT HAD TO BE IN the genes and it was. But not from her father as you'd expect—him being a dentist who encouraged his daughter's independence but preferred small towns to a ranch. No, the natural talent came from her mother Sarah, the real "ramrod" of the family and one of New Mexico's pioneer ranch women.

Vera's earliest memories were of the ranch her mother finally convinced her father to buy—a "cow outfit down on the Cimarron" near Clayton, New Mexico. The family moved to the ranch when Vera was three, but stayed only a few years, as the ranch never supported the family. By the time she was 10, the family had settled in a little town in Missouri.

So Vera wasn't raised as a ranch girl, like most who took to the rodeo circuit; she didn't even talk like a Western woman. Sure, she had an inkling for four-legged animals, but it was a two-legged, handsome cowboy who got her into the ring.

Her "undoing," as she'd later joke, came in the summer of 1913. Art Acord, a "big blond Don Juan" she'd met along the way, showed up in Salt Lake City for the 4th of July's Frontier Day Celebration. Vera had recently moved to town to make her living as a stenographer. She passed for 18, but really was 21, and was pretty as a picture. (Today's popular actress Kristin Scott Thomas is her dead ringer look-alike.) Acord invited Vera out to the rodeo and gave her the lasting nickname of "Mac." She hung around to be near him, but Acord turned out to be a matchmaker, rather than a lover, and introduced her to the man who would steal, hold and then break her heart.

Rodeo competitor Earl Simpson had sparkling black eyes, straight black hair, a cleft chin and was "a bit more reserved without a horse under him." Vera was instantly hooked.

Toward the end of the rodeo run, she overheard a promoter wishing he had another girl relay rider and she instantly volunteered. She took third. The next day she quit her job, packed her few belongings and joined the rodeo circuit.

"That was the decision that shifted the indicator on my life's chart," she'd write. "If I'd pulled up right then, I likely would have missed the years of hardship, heartache, fun, adventure, a smidgen of fame, and, finally, a broken body. But I'm glad I didn't, for I can honestly say the glamour never faded. It dimmed once in a while when I was hurt or overworked, but after a rest I always felt that I wouldn't trade being a rodeo cowgirl for any other profession."

SHE MARRIED EARL in 1914, but it would last only 10, often miserable, years. Although she claimed he was her first husband, *True West* discovered she had been married once before as a teenager, but that marriage lasted only a few months. In 1931, she would marry an "easy-going, big six-footer" named Homer Parra, who she stayed with until her death.

And who can decipher the real story of Vera's long relationship with the Sultan of Johore, one of the world's richest men? She met him on tour in Indonesia and they communicated for decades afterwards—he sometimes signed his handwritten letters "please accept my little love to you." He shot tigers and panthers for her and sent the skins to her home in California. He also sent dozens of pictures of himself and was forever begging her for new snapshots. If she felt a "little love" for the man, she kept it to herself, although her scrapbook includes a clipping on his death in 1959.

No, love wasn't Vera's strong suit.

But give her a horse and she could do magic.

*Vera and the Sultan of Johore: This handsome, rich man was enamored with the beautiful rodeo star whom he watched from the royal box in Indonesia, where Vera was on tour. He later threw a luncheon in her honor and for the rest of his life, showered her with gifts and loving notes.*



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*(Below) Vera and "The Girls" always got lots of attention when they performed at rodeos around the world, and it wasn't just because they were a pretty novelty: Vera was often lauded as an excellent horsewoman who could do almost anything on a horse, including besting men in relay races.*

YOU'VE GOT TO REEK confidence to call yourself "The Greatest Show on Earth," but then nobody ever accused the Ringling Brothers of lacking moxie. When the Ringling Bros. and Barnum and Bailey Circus opened in New York's Madison Square Garden in March of 1923, it brought with it the reigning stars of the rodeo world and by now, Vera was one of them.

If the rodeo ring was dust and dirt, Madison Square Garden was spic and span. It all seemed so glamorous, especially the spectacular opening, when everyone rode through the ring in beautiful, if improbable, costumes.

"We rode black horses with gigantic hoopskirts hanging from our waists, the flounces reaching the ground," she remembered. Add to that the picture hats and ostrich plumbs and you can see why she thought they "looked like mammoth Dresden dolls."

After the Garden, she joined the circus on its nationwide tour, but soon jumped at the chance of giving Europe its first taste of a true rodeo.

In 1924, Europe was a hoot for Vera McGinnis. She and nearly 200 of America's other top rodeo hands went over on an old troop ship with promoter Tex Austin for the "World Championship" at Wembley, England.

"Without doubt, we were a thrilling sight to those Londoners who had never been any closer to our great West and its inhabitants than the motion-picture screen," she'd later write.

Vera got a humorous reminder she was on foreign soil when her landlady asked her "what time do you wish to be

*Vera's passport opened up a world few American women had a chance to explore, as it took her from one side of the globe to the other.*



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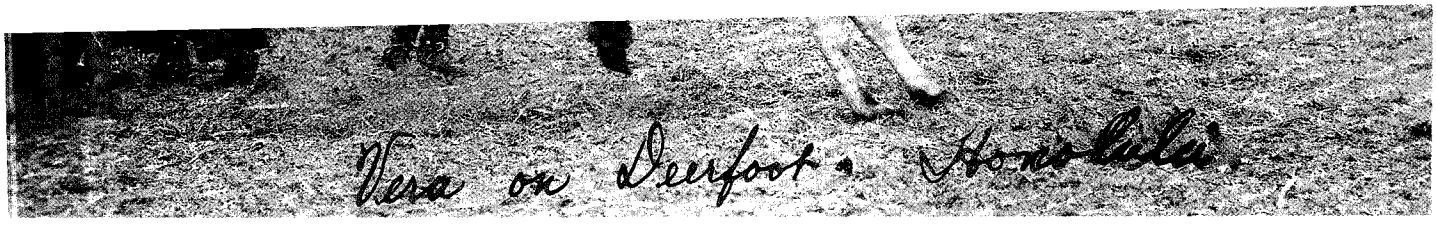


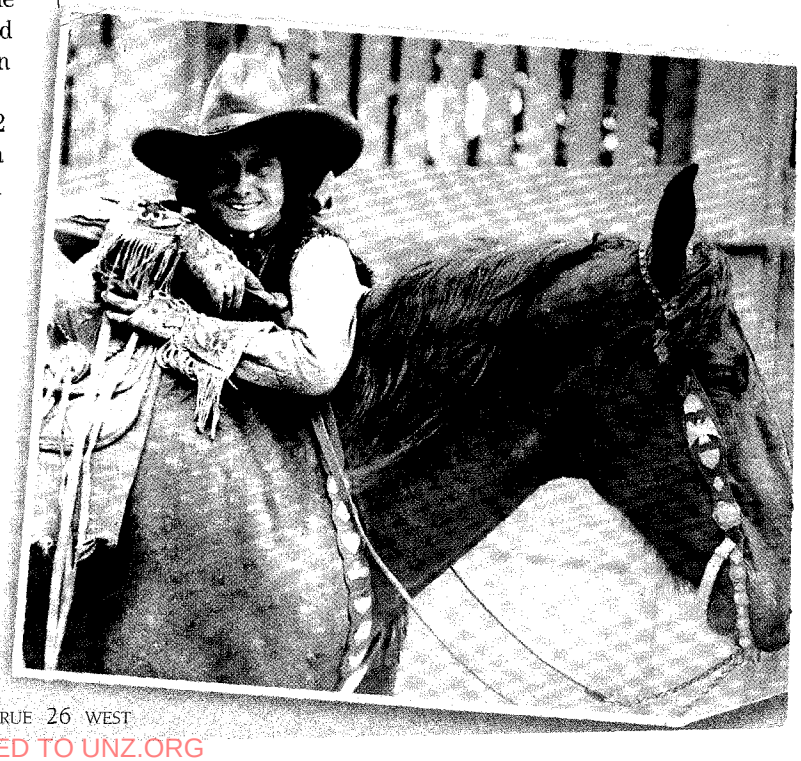

*Vera remembered her first time on a bull in 1914: "The animal was so wide I felt as if I were straddling the dining-room table, and to top everything else, his hide was loose, and I rolled around like butter on a hot plate." But she ran the clock and was on her way to becoming "a real hand" in the rodeo world.*

knocked up in the morning, Miss McGinnis?" Trying to keep a straight face, Vera said she'd like her wake-up call at 7 a.m.

For the first performance, 93,000 people showed up and the rodeo stars became the toasts of London. Lavish dinners were thrown for them by the Prince of Wales, who hadn't yet met the woman he would abandon the throne to marry (and decades later, Vera's look-alike, Kristin Scott Thomas, would portray Wallis Simpson in the movies). London hostesses vied for the cowgirls and cowboys, requesting that they wear their Western clothes to the fancy parties.

The Wembley Rodeo was a 16-day show, with 32 performances. Vera rode one bucking horse a day, did a trick riding demonstration for the afternoon and evening shows and rode a daily relay race. She won two world championships, the trick riding contest and the cowgirl's relay race. The rodeo was such a success, management decided to add another week. After that, another promoter booked Vera and other champions for a month at the London Coliseum, then the largest stage in the world. She later went to Dublin for that country's first rodeo. Vera would always keep a soft spot in her heart for Ireland, where she was treated like a movie star. When an injury demanded she spend a few days in bed, her room filled up with flowers from adoring fans.

She also won the trophy that would forever be her favorite. It was made of elephant tusk with walrus-tusk handles. (Later, when she retired, she made it into a lamp and read by it in her favorite chair. The trophy has now been "delamped" and is on display at the Cowgirl Hall of Fame.)



*Vera and "Shortie": Her livestock came first (even when she was married) and she counted herself a success when she could feed everybody on what she was making in the ring or as a movie stunt double.*



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It's worn and tattered now, the black-bound "scrap book" she carried from one rodeo to the next.

These are the press clippings and memorabilia of the 21-year career of Vera McGinnis, proof of how the world saw her.

It is a precious collection—no one could hope to reassemble these stories, printed on three continents from 1913-1934.

It's easy to see her smiling as she clipped and taped another review, since this scrap book is populated with rave reviews—if she ever got "bad press," she didn't bother to keep it.

*Looking every bit the beautiful movie star she tried to be, Vera poses in her California garden with some of her trophies, won on three continents. She had a tendency to make her favorite trophies into lamps.*

Here's a sampling of newspaper clippings:

• Sheridan, Wyoming, 1915: Noting Vera is the nation's only "girl jockey": "The boy jockeys don't like to ride against a girl and they kick about it . . . but the spirit of American Fair Play in the audience always [prevails] and the girl is permitted to ride. As a usual thing, she wins. . . . Vera McGinnis is in a class by herself as an all around cowgirl."

• Prescott, Arizona, July 4, 1917: "More rodeo prize money has been won by Vera McGinnis, fancy trick rider, than any other woman rodeo performer."

• Phoenix, Arizona, November 14, 1917: "On a high spirited, flea-bitten gray, Vera McGinnis, claimant to the world championship among women vaqueros, led off the cowboy sports program with a drunken cowboy act that startled the spectators. Quaffing nothing stronger than soda pop from a flask, Miss McGinnis stood on her horse's withers with the animal in a dead run and reeled backward and forward and sidewise until it appeared as though she would topple from her unstable mount into the dust track. But not so. The daring girl piloted her steed several hundred yards and brought him to a halt without losing control for a moment."

• Headline in London, 1925: "The Most Discussed Women in Town, Rodeo Cowgirls," pictures Vera with others.

• Indonesia, 1926: "Miss Vera McGinnis, the acknowledged champion girl rider of the world, who won two championships at Wembley [England] last year and well over 100 other cups and medals in all parts of the world, gave a thrilling exhibition of trick riding."

• Colorado Springs, Colorado, 1926: Vera "can do anything on a horse" and is "about the finest horsewoman in the game."

• Hanford, California, (no date, probably 1933): Announcing Vera was a "special attraction" at the Pioneer Day Celebration: "for six years world's champion trick rider among women and holder of records all over the world . . . called the best dressed cowgirl ever appearing in Madison Square Garden, Miss McGinnis also has a nationwide reputation as a bronc and steer rider, often competing with the best of the men riders. Miss McGinnis carried off all honors at the 1932 California Rodeo."

• Livermore, California, June 15, 1934: Reporting her "precarious" condition after Sunday's bad accident, adding: "Miss McGinnis . . . is extremely popular here, having been a regular performer for the past 15 years. She had appeared at every show of consequence in this country and in Europe."

BY 1934, VERA McGINNIS had seen the world, won about every rodeo championship, made enough to support herself—mostly just enough to get by—and was in excellent health for the first time in years. All the injuries she had suffered along the way were healed, and she was riding in fine form.

Then came the relay race in Livermore, California, on June 10, 1934. "My big wreck," Vera would call it.

Reba Perry Blakely later wrote that she was riding beside Vera that Sunday.

"Vera started whipping her relay mount and it fell—right in front of me but down on the rail, inside, and did a heels over head complete summersault, crushing Vera and her body into a railroad tie fence post. Horrible sound; a horrible sight for me to witness. Vera never again regained that wonderful, vivacious personality all we pioneers of rodeo knew."

"One minute I was a champion horsewoman, riding as well as I'd ever ridden in my life, the next, a crumpled heap," Vera said in her autobiography.

But what happened next was even worse.

"I was taken to a hospital in Livermore and X-rayed that afternoon. A nurse was kept busy removing the pan full of clotted blood that kept rolling out of my mouth. I couldn't speak; I couldn't even turn my head. . . . After visiting hours my doctor asked me about money. I made him understand there was no insurance or bank account for him to draw on, and the next thing I was aware of was being slid into an old rattletrap of an ambulance. This was seven hours later and still nothing had been done for me. Perhaps it was the money."

She was sent off to the Alameda County Hospital without anyone notifying her husband or the rodeo association, and without a shred of paperwork to explain who she was or what had happened. An angry attendant kept after her, and she finally struggled to explain she lived near Los Angeles. "No one wanted to touch me because I didn't live in Alameda County. Who had dumped me on them? It sounded as though they expected me to get up off that stretcher and leave!

"But dumped I had been and there I stayed until five o'clock the next afternoon without a single thing being done for me. Several times during that interval men in white came to my cot, lifted my right leg and rotated it in mid-air. I could hear the bones grind in my broken hip, and so could they, for they'd listen. I'd scream, of course, and the nurse would tell me to shut up. Then they'd lay the leg



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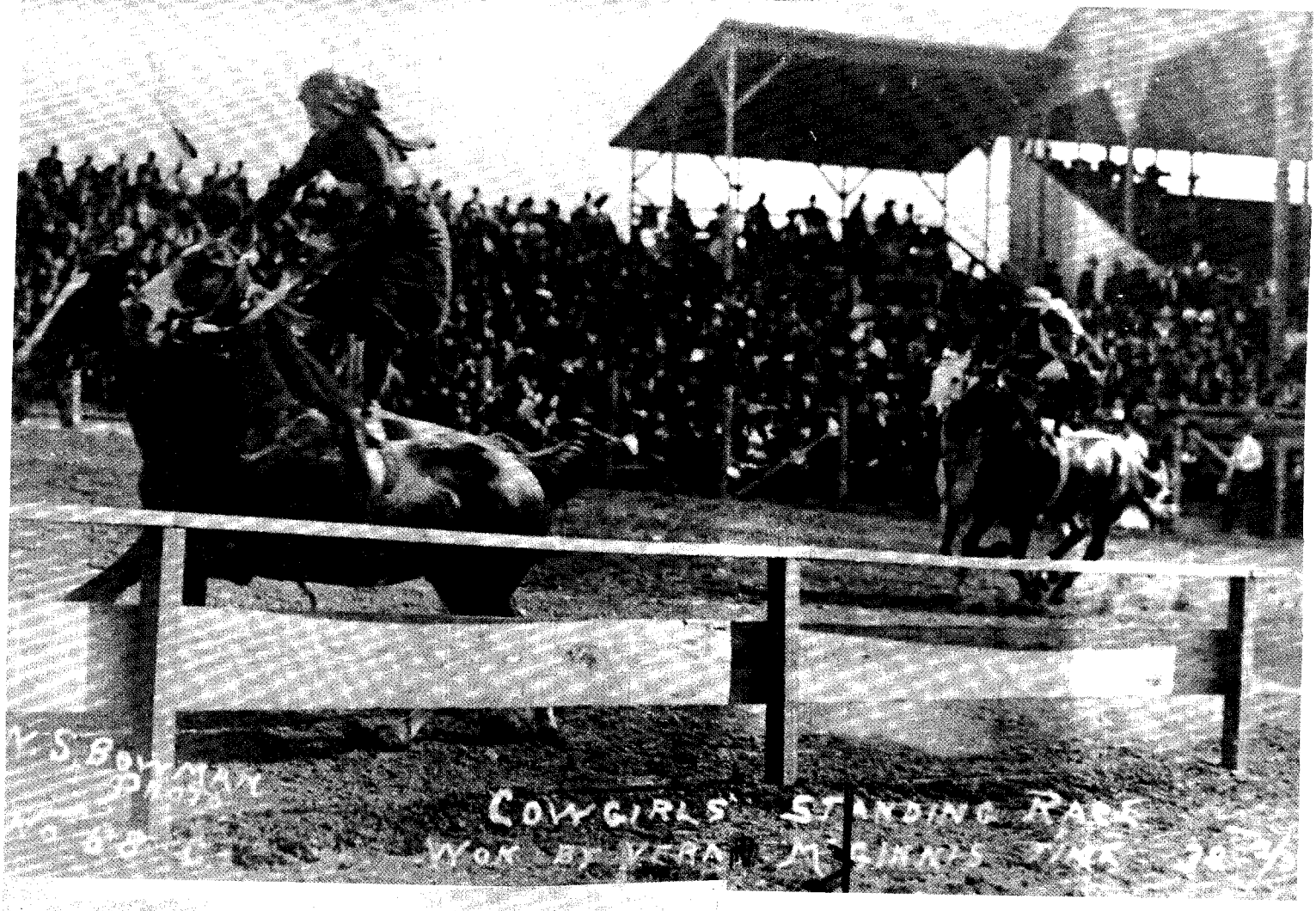


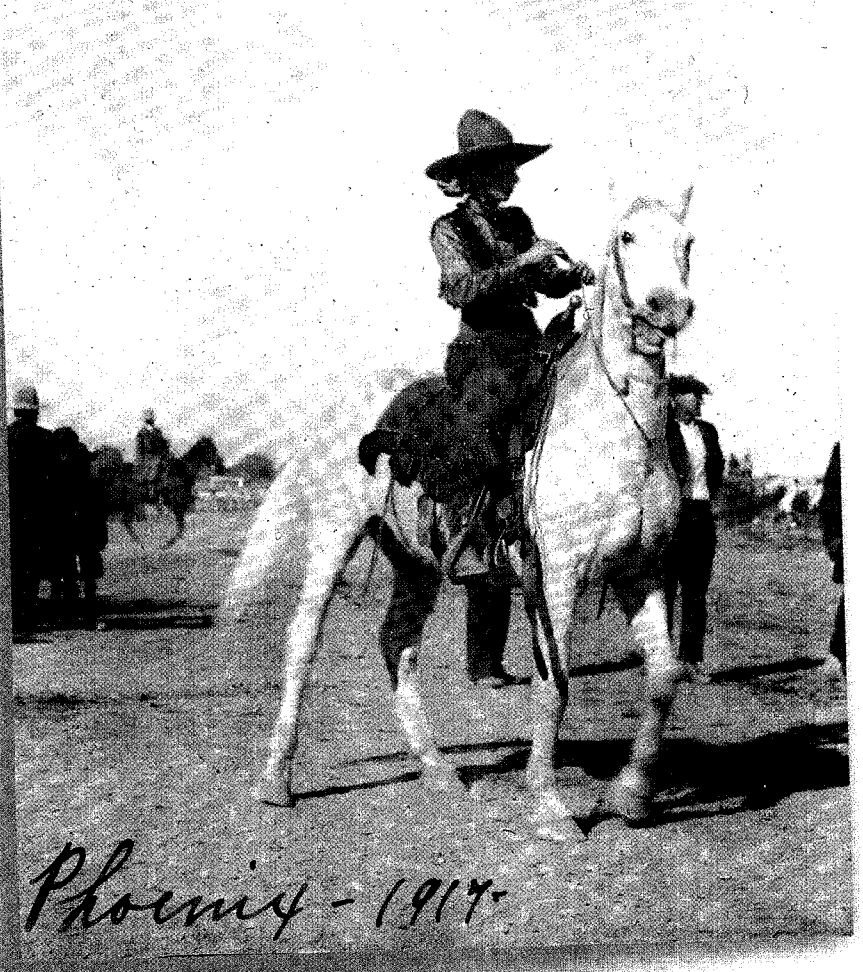


*(Above) Vera riding "Roman": standing on the backs of two galloping horses, she'd go around the ring to the cheers and yelps of an appreciative audience. She perfected tricks like this so quickly, many saw her as a natural horsewoman. (Left) 1917 found Vera in Phoenix for what turned into a long, hot and awful summer, but the media in Arizona loved her and provided some of her most glowing press clippings.*

back down, not too gently and walk on. Once a different intern came on duty and when he read my chart he said, 'Is she still here'? It didn't occur to me that he thought I'd be dead by then."

Monday afternoon her husband finally found her and rushed her to Oakland Hospital, where she was told her chances of survival were slight. Five weeks later, she walked out of the hospital with the help of a cane.

A year later, Vera wrote to a friend in England, "I went to my first rodeo last Sunday at the Hoot Gibson ranch. Last year I won everything up there and this year I went as a Has Been. It has been a little hard to take but I have decided to sell my saddles and all my equipment. I walk with a limp which I think I will overcome in time but I am going to try and get interested in something else."


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Her new interest was writing her life story, which took her decades. The book was published in 1974 to glowing reviews, but poor sales. It is now out of print.

She and Homer settled into a quiet life in California. They raised thoroughbreds. Homer was a wrangler for the movies; Vera was devoted to her pets and her garden.

She had two last moments of fame as reporters again came calling to tell the story of a rodeo pioneer: in 1979, when she was inducted into the Cowgirl Hall of Fame in Fort Worth, Texas, and then in 1985, when she was inducted into the Rodeo Hall of Fame in the National Cowboy and Western Heritage Museum in Oklahoma City.

"Many other aspiring cowgirls lacked her gritty resolve, and more than half the women who participated in professional rodeo during this era dropped out after only one or two years on the circuit," notes author Mary Lou LeCompte in her book, *Cowgirls of the Rodeo.*

Eventually, Vera and Homer's health deteriorated so much, they were put in a nursing home in Northern California. Vera was confined to a wheelchair and outlived Homer. "Vera is very unhappy and is pretty much a problem as she has been so independent all her life," a friend noted.

Vera McGinnis Farra died on October 23, 1990. "She hadn't been in any pain," the friend reported. She was 98 years old.

"I would do it all over again," Vera said in one of her last interviews, "if they could leave out that last fall."

*Follow the joys and sorrows of this pioneer cowgirl in upcoming "Chapters of Vera's Life." In the next issue of* True West, *find out how Vera changed rodeo fashion.*

## U.S. POSTAGE STAMP: VERA McGINNIS

*True West* believes Vera is so deserving of a postage stamp in her honor, we have nominated her for the national recognition and invite anyone else inspired by her "cowgirl spirit" to join the campaign.

In a letter to the Citizens Stamp Advisory Committee in Washington D.C., *True West* executive editor Bob Boze Bell wrote: "In the early years of the 20th century, Vera and her fellow buckaroos

overcame restrictions, stereotypes and prejudice to make their way in the rough and wild world of rodeos, distinguishing themselves as America's first professional women athletes.

"In researching her life, we have found her to be a most impressive and inspiring athlete—one of the women who led the way for so many others. Her grit and determination epitomize pioneer American women."

The National Cowgirl Museum and Hall of Fame in Fort Worth is joining our campaign for a Vera stamp.

Above are some possible designs illustrated by Bob Boze Bell.

*Letters supporting Vera's nomination should be sent to:*

**Citizens Stamp Advisory Committee**
475 L'Enfant Plaza SW, Room 5670
Washington, D.C. 20260

***Vera learned to "make the best of it" during her 20 years on the rodeo circuit, often as a woman on her own. Her mother's advice did her well: "Do your best, Vera. If you win, be gracious, if you lose be gracious. . . . Getting to strut your stuff is what really counts."***

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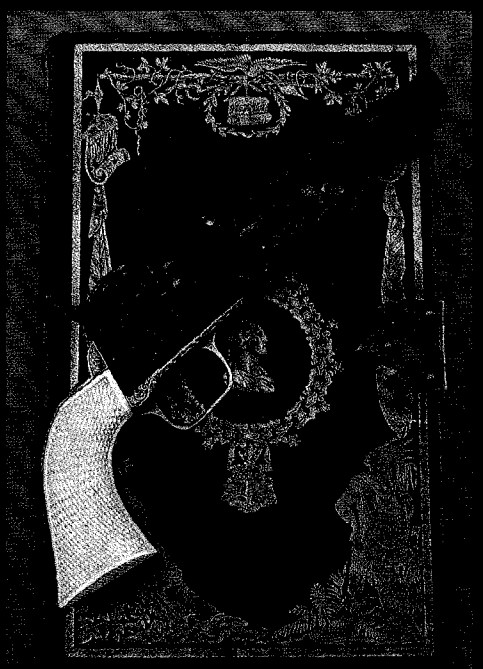

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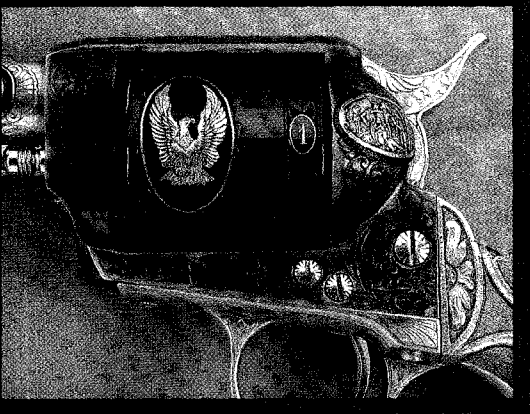


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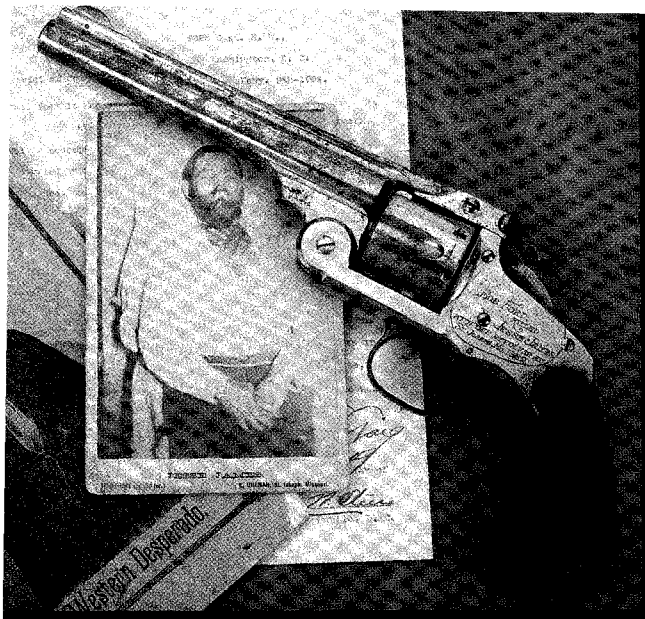
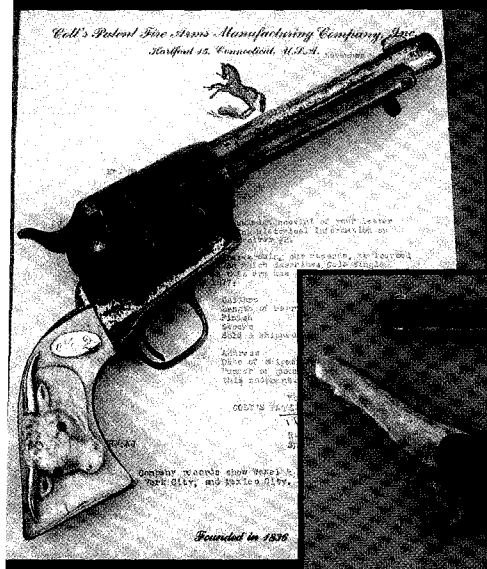
**SUNDAY & MONDAY**




Period documented S&W that Bob Ford use
to kill Jesse James.

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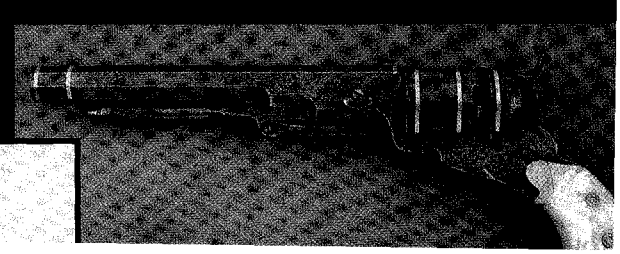

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# IMPORTANT FIREARMS AUCTION

Early Texas Ranger Dragoon

**November 9 & 10, 2003**
**SUNDAY & MONDAY**

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**CATALOGS:** Sessions I & IA (the Robert Petersen & the Robert Stack collections) will be available at $58. + $15 FedEx. Sessions II, III, & IV will be available at $60. for the 3 + $20. FedEx. The bargain price for all four Sessions is $108. + $25. FedEx. Add $70. for overseas shipping.

**SESSION I:**
**THE ROBERT PETERSEN COLLECTION OF MAGNIFICENT ANTIQUE FIREARMS.** Robert E. Petersen is a legend in the world of firearms and beyond. As the founder of HOT ROD, GUNS & AMMO and MOTOR TREND Mr. Petersen's name is known worldwide. Mr. Petersen inspired and endowed the Petersen Automotive Museum, considered the finest automotive museum in America. The Petersen Collection of Magnificent Arms was to have become a museum but will now be sold to the arms collecting fraternity which Mr. Petersen has fostered for decades through Guns & Ammo Magazine and the now highly collectible Guns & Ammo Annuals.

**SESSION IA:**
**THE ROBERT STACK COLLECTION.** Robert Stack, world recognized film and television star, was one of America's premiere and international class skeet shooters who was identified with competitive shooting for the last nearly 50 years.

**SESSIONS II, III, & IV** will feature consignments from the estates of the Honorable **BARRY GOLDWATER** and **MICHAEL WAYNE**, son of John Wayne and producer of many of the Duke's legendary western films. Items to be sold include special presentations to both Barry Goldwater and Michael Wayne, and a selection of firearms inherited by Michael Wayne from his father John Wayne.

Special Features include the actual Smith & Wesson revolver used by Bob Ford to shoot Jesse James, fully period documented; Serial #2 Colt Single Action Army; factory engraved Colt Single Action Army Black Powder Sheriff's Model shipped to Texas; a fantastic collection of Parker shotguns up to AA Grade with many small gauges; a great selection of important Bowie knives including exhibition knives, historic and early Texas Bowies by Chevalier; a large collection of pre-war Colt Autos and Double Action revolvers, many mint to near mint in their original boxes. Also, a comprehensive selection of Winchester rifles from 1860-1940; the best selection of martial and factory martial percussion revolvers in the finest condition we have offered in more than a decade; high grade swords, a cane collection, a magnificent Nimschke engraved and gold inlaid Manhattan revolver with history, pictured in the Nimschke book and documented by Nimschke's own engraving pulls; a large grouping of miniatures from the Michael Wayne estate; a comprehensive collection of Trapper Models also from the Michael Wayne estate; important Winchester and Colt Commemoratives and presentations from the Goldwater and Wayne families; Sitting Bull's breastplate and trade gun; Capt. Will Wright of the Texas Ranger's 1873 Winchester Carbine; Remington revolver belonging to Jefferson Davis with documentation dating back to 1913; early martial and high grade Single Actions, some of the best percussion Colts ever sold including Patersons, Dragoons, Navies, Roots, and nearly every important collector's Model Colt.

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# The 50 Greatest Books on the American West

*Prisms for learning about America's past.*

## *Cowboys . . . gunfighters . . . the Alamo*

and other icons of the Old West are the soul of the American psyche. Since Lewis and Clark, it has been impossible to understand the United States without first grasping the hold that the West has on the American imagination.

Books are the key to that understanding. Whether they are journals, diaries or the labor of historians, books are our primary means of knowing our past.

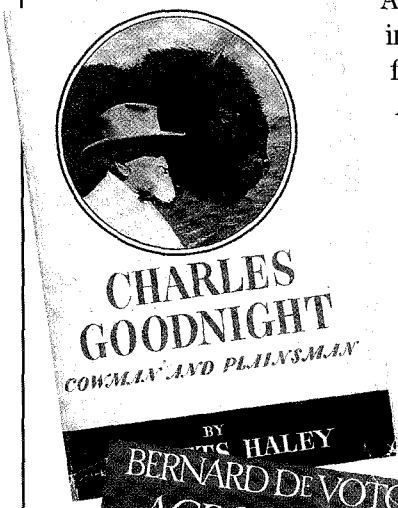
Many of us who love the Old West gained our initial interest through novels, whether by Owen Wister, Willa Cather, Wallace Stegner or other good writers of historical fiction. Not only do such authors often do as much research as academic historians, novelists also bring to their work an understanding of the human condition.

To come up with our list of the 50 most important books about the American West, the editors at *True West* asked our panel of scholars to nominate books that were deemed worthy to be included. Although our panelists often duplicated choices made by one another, their combined final list contained 178 titles. From this list, the editors reduced the total to 50. Although most of the books are nonfiction, a few are fiction. All, in our opinion, have helped shape how we view the West.

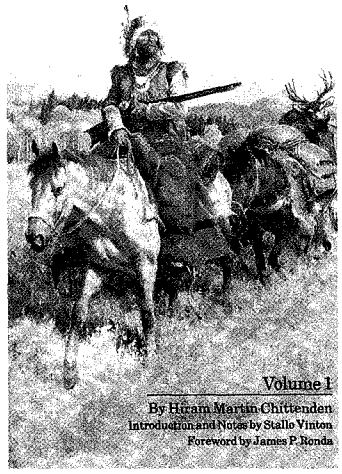
So read our list and see if you agree with our choices. If you don't agree, let us know. But be sure to read those books with which you are unfamiliar. You'll be doing yourself a giant favor.

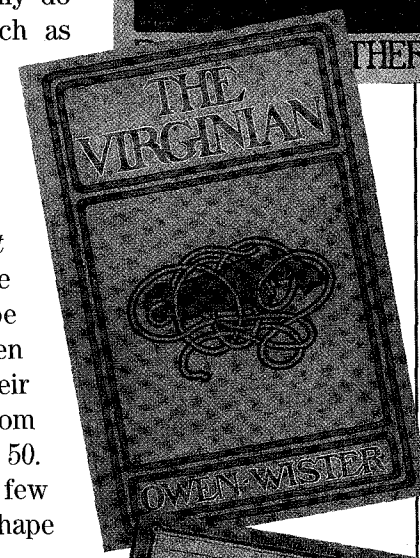
**—R.G. Robertson, Editor**

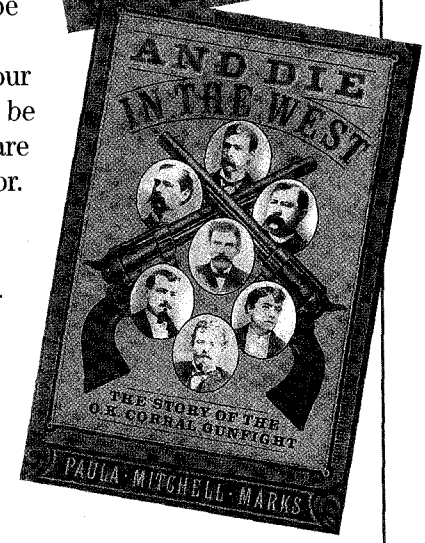
True West *thanks its contributors: Johnny D. Boggs, Daniel Buck, Neil Carmony, Robert Clark, Wayne Cornell, Richard H. Dillon, Sandra Johnson, Robert G. McCubbin, Anne Meadows, Chuck Parsons, Lynda A. Sanchez, Marshall Trimble, W. Clark Whitehorn and Linda Wommack.*




The American Fur Trade of the Far West



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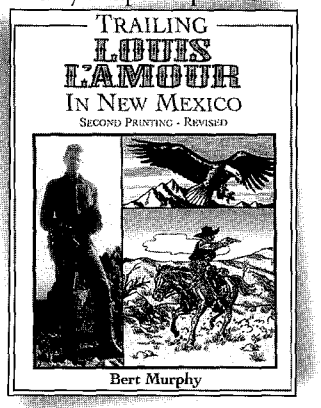
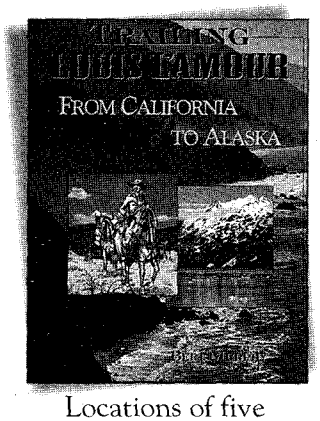
# Trailing Louis L'Amour

Many maps & photos




Locations of nine
Louis L'Amour novels
220 pages. $22.00

*If Louis L'Amour wrote about a trail, it was there*

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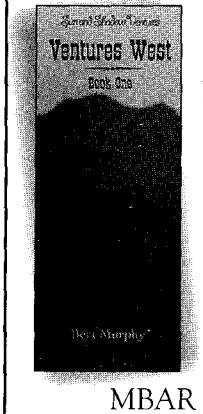


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### Across the Wide Missouri
By Bernard DeVoto (1947)

This book is not only an important history about the peak years of the mountain man era, but also a fun read. DeVoto is one of the first writers after Francis Parkman to blend scholarship with a good read in discussing the Westward movement.

### The American Fur Trade of the Far West
By Hiram Martin Chittenden (1902)

Written at a time when most American historians focused on the East, Chittenden's three-volume book (now published in two volumes) shows the importance of the Western fur trade to the history of the United States.

### An Authentic Life of Billy the Kid
By Pat Garrett (1882)

Ghost written by newspaperman Ash Upson and filled with errors and fiction, this work helped create the legend of Billy the Kid.

### And Die in the West
By Paula Mitchell Marks (1989)

Although Marks is often faulted for her acceptance of some claims by hoaxer Glenn G. Boyer, this study of the events leading up to and following the Gunfight near the O.K. Corral remains the most reliable and complete to date.

### Angle of Repose
By Wallace Stegner (1971)

This Pulitzer-prize winning novel bridges four generations and draws timeless parallels in the life of retired historian Lyman Ward and his pioneering grandparents. The book is brilliantly written from the perspective of Lyman's great-grandmother, who supported her family by writing about her frontier experiences for a popular Eastern magazine.

### Astoria, or Anecdotes of an Enterprise Beyond the Rocky Mountains
By Washington Irving (1836)

This is one of the most complete accounts of John Jacob Astor's failed attempt at monopolizing the North American fur trade, due to Irving's access not only to Astor's records but also to Astor himself.

### Bat Masterson
By Robert K. DeArment (1979)

Richard O'Connor's *Bat Masterson* may have spawned the NBC series, but DeArment sets a new standard for accurate historical biography with his work on this Old West lawman. It remains the best Masterson biography to date.

### Bent's Fort
By David Lavender (1954)

This book is as sweeping as the plains of Colorado where Bent's Fort was located. The story of the Bent brothers and the fur trade is recounted in detail. Written nearly 50 years ago, the book still holds up as a masterpiece.

### Beyond the Hundredth Meridian
By Wallace Stegner (1954)

This is an important book on John Wesley Powell, the West's last great explorer and an early champion of human cooperation in the arid West, written by a pulitzer-prize winner.

### The Big Sky
By A.B. Guthrie, Jr. (1947)

Still in print over 50 years after it was published, this epic novel of the fur trade by one of America's great storytellers is as big as the country in which it is set. *The Way West* won Guthrie the Pulitzer Prize in 1949, but *The Big Sky* is a better read and is an uncompromising look at a band of mountain men who destroy the life they love.

### Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee
By Dee Brown (1970)

Maybe it's not the best history of the trans-Mississippi Indian Wars, but the book's rendition of tribal council records, autobiographies and firsthand descriptions captured an audience when it was first published and still captures an audience today. (For an objective examination of both sides, read S.L.A. Marshall's *Crimsoned Prairie.*)

### The Butterfield Overland Mail, 1857–1869
By Roscoe P. and Margaret B. Conkling (1947)

This is the primary source of information on



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the Butterfield Overland Mail, which was the first great overland postal service from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Coast. Scholars uniformly agree with Texas historian A. C. Greene, who stated that the authors' effort "stands out most magnificently."

## The California and Oregon Trail: Being Sketches of Prairie and Rocky Mountain Life

By Francis Parkman (1849)

Tourist-historian Parkman provides a firsthand look at the Great Plains during the peak years of America's Westward migration. For over 150 years, readers have been captivated by the adventures of this young Boston Brahmin loose on the prairie.

## Charles Goodnight: Cowman and Plainsman

By J. Evetts Haley (1936)

Although not the first book on Charles Goodnight, Haley's book is the best biography of a stockman. Haley first met Goodnight in 1925 and preserved his memories of the panhandle country.

## The Conquest of Apacheria

By Dan L. Thrapp (1967)

No one yet has matched Thrapp's careful and caring accounts of the Apache wars and his fair presentation from both the Apache and military perspectives.

## Commerce of the Prairies

By Josiah Gregg (1844)

The sickly Josiah Gregg may have angered his expedition companions, but Santa Fe Trail historians are thankful he not only stopped to record the customs and tales of the land, but also compiled his nine-year journey as an explorer and trader. The book remains a classic reference and is a good adventure story to boot.

## John Wesley Hardin: Dark Angel of Texas

By Leon C. Metz (1996)

This John Wesley Hardin biography will remain the standard due to Metz's intense research, readable style and numerous illustrations.

## Death Comes for the Archbishop

By Willa Cather (1927)

Chosen by the editorial board of the Modern Library as one of the 100 best English-language novels of the 20th century, *Death Comes for the Archbishop* is Cather's tribute to the American Southwest. She drew her inspiration from a statue of Archbishop Lamy at the St. Francis Cathedral in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

## The Devil Knows How to Ride

By Edward E. Leslie (1996)

Leslie uncovers new information about William Clarke Quantrill's early years in this excellent biography of the general, which includes material on Quantrill's henchmen and guerrilla warfare in the Civil War. It supercedes William E. Connelley's 1910 biography, *Quantrill and the Border Wars.*

## Encyclopedia of Frontier Biography

By Dan L. Thrapp (1988-1994)

This reference work contains biographical sketches on over 5,530 individuals associated with the American frontier from the sixth to the 20th century. Each entry includes a bibliographical note enabling further research. The encyclopedia became a library reference standard almost from its first day of publication.

## Forty Years on the Frontier

By Granville Stuart (1925)

Stuart was one of the first great cattle barons of the Northwest, and his journal is one of the classic accounts of frontier life. Historian J. Frank Dobie said: "Nothing better on the cowboys has ever been written than the chapter entitled 'Cattle Business.' A prime work throughout."

## The Great Plains

By Walter Prescott Webb (1931)

This is the first book to suggest the importance to the U.S. of its "Great American Desert," and to say Westward migration stalled at the 98th meridian

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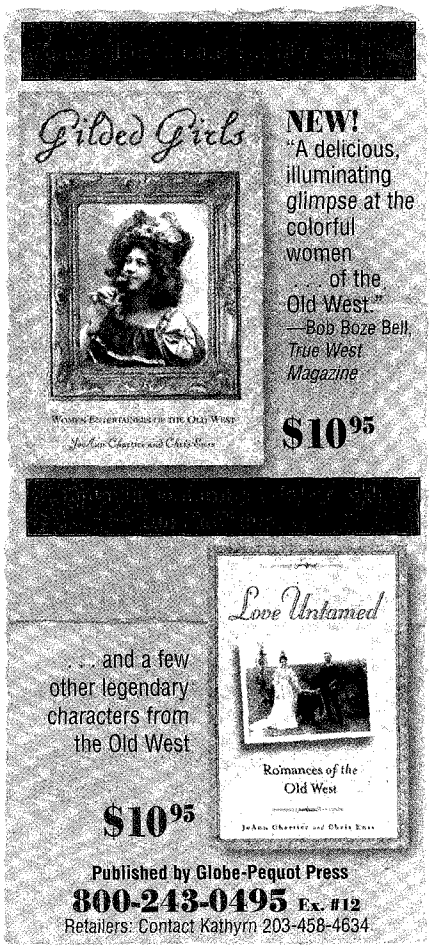





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until technological innovations allowed the pioneers to proceed. In the mid-1930s, Webb was awarded Columbia University's Loubat Prize for the best book published over a five-year period.

## Historic Sketches of the Cattle Trade of the West and Southwest

By Joseph G. McCoy (1874)

Written by the king of the cattle trade, McCoy's history is a must for anyone interested in the post-Civil War trail drives and Kansas' first trail towns. *Historic Sketches* is one of the earliest books on ranching and trail-herding.

## "I Will Fight No More Forever": Chief Joseph and the Nez Perce War

By Merrill D. Beal (1963)

Never-before published letters and diaries of eyewitnesses and Nez Perce decedents bring to life the 1877 Indian war waged against relocation. "A world surfeited with deceptive success stories can ill afford to forget a people and their leader who attained their true moral stature as they were facing their doom," cautioned Herman J. Deutsch, professor emeritus of American History at Washington State University.

## Jedediah Smith and the Opening of the West

By Dale Morgan (1953)

When Morgan's classic book came out, it contained all known correspondence by Jedediah Smith—the most intellectual of mountain men and a great explorer. David J. Weber's 1990 book *Californios versus Jedediah Smith, 1826-27* includes newly discovered letters found in Mexico's National Archives, written by Mexican officials and by Smith and his party.

## Jeff Milton: A Good Man with a Gun

By J. Evetts Haley (1948)

Although Haley emphasizes only the positive aspects of Milton's life, he's provided an important biography of a turn-of-the-century Texas Ranger and lawman. The book is an excellent example of working with a living subject and providing a reliable account of his life.

## The Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition

Edited by Gary L. Moulton (1983-2001)

This is the most complete and thoroughly interpreted version of the Lewis and Clark saga, as it includes the journals of not only Lewis & Clark, but also other Corps members as well. The University of Nebraska Press is publishing an online edition of all the journals (read Volume 4 at lewisandclarkjournals.unl.edu/).

## A Journey through Texas

By Frederick Law Olmsted (1857)

Olmsted's journeys through Texas reinforced his deep-seated hatred of slavery, as he witnessed German cotton farmers out-produce their slave-holding neighbors. *The New York Daily Times* had assigned Olmsted to write about Southern slavery, and this book is one of many accounts of Olmsted's travels through the South.

## Lazy B

By Sandra Day O'Connor and H. Alan Day (2002)

You get the feel of ranch life in this account of an 160,000-acre cattle ranch split between Arizona and New Mexico. *Lazy B* is an anecdotal read, without much reflection on the authors' adult lives, and is mainly perceived to be Sandra's book, as her experiences are all written in the first person while her brother Alan's are in the third.

## The Lincoln County War

By Frederick W. Nolan (1992)

With this documentary history of the famous range war, Nolan establishes himself as the preeminent authority on the Lincoln County War. Nolan's commentary weaves together eyewitness and participant accounts, and the photographs make this work a doubly valuable source of information.

## The Log of a Cowboy

By Andy Adams (1903)

Adams' trail-driving story is a rare example of a novel that can be used as a history book. "If all the other books on trail-driving were destroyed, a reader could still get a just and authentic conception of trail men, trail work, range cattle, cow horses, and the cow country in general from *The Log of a Cowboy,*" wrote historian J. Frank Dobie.



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## Lonesome Dove
By Larry McMurtry (1985)

This is a sweeping epic of two ex-Texas Rangers who follow a dream and drive a cattle herd from South Texas to Montana. The story is based on true-life characters, such as Charles Goodnight, Nat Love and Oliver Loving. McMurtry paved the way for serious yet romantic Western fiction during a time when the genre was about dead, and he ended up winning the Pulitzer Prize.

## The Mountain Men and the Fur Trade of the Far West
Edited by LeRoy R. Hafen (1965-72)

Hafen's epic work is the most complete compendium of information ever published on the mountain men and fur traders. Along with noted scholars and history buffs from throughout the country, Hafen compiled biographies of the major figures in the fur trade of the far West. Harvey L. Carter said of Hafen and his wife, who helped him, they were "more thorough than Thwaites, more faithful to their originals than Quaife, and more accurate and careful than Hulbert."

## My Antonia
By Willa Cather (1918)

An autobiographical look at life on the Nebraska plains, Cather's masterpiece is considered her best book, although it could easily be replaced here by her 1913 novel *O Pioneers!* Antonia is a genuine heroine, who "still had that something which fires the imagination, could still stop one's breath for a moment by a look or gesture that somehow revealed the meaning in common things."

## On the Border with Crook
By John G. Bourke (1891)

If only all army officers on the frontier could have written half as well as Bourke, but sadly, few works have succeeded in capturing Indian ethnology and military history as well as this detailed treatise on life under Gen. George Crook.

## Pat Garrett: The Story of a Western Lawman
By Leon C. Metz (1974)

Curiously enough, until this biography of Garrett, there was no satisfactory study of the man whose name is internationally recognized. This will remain the standard biography for decades to come.

## The Plains Across
By John D. Unruh, Jr. (1979)

This detailed record of the largest migration in world history is considered by many to be the best book ever written about the Oregon and California Trails. The book was a Pulitzer Prize finalist in 1980 and has won several other awards, including the Western Heritage Award.

## Roughing It
By Mark Twain (1872)

Fiction, nonfiction, travel essay, comedy . . . whatever you call it, Samuel Clemens' classic showcases the true spirit of the frontier. Reviews were mixed, but William Dean Howell's review in the June 1872 *Atlantic Monthly* sums it up best: "Probably an encyclopedia could not be constructed from the book; the work of a human being, it is not unbrokenly nor infallibly funny; nor is it to be always praised for all the literary virtues; but it is singularly entertaining, and its humor is always amiable, manly, and generous."

## The Saga of Billy the Kid
By Walter Noble Burns (1926)

Possibly as significant as Garrett's *Authentic Life,* Burns' biography creates a picture of the Kid that established him as a youthful, misunderstood rebel, and influenced many later writers, movies and legends.

## Sam Bass and Gang
By Rick Miller (1999)

Miller's biography of this popular Texas outlaw has replaced Wayne Gard's 1936 biography. Miller's legal career and his research skills enabled him to uncover and interpret new material relevant to Bass and his times.

## Son of the Morning Star
By Evan Connell (1984)

One of the most dramatic events of the American West finds its Boswell. Although this is a meandering read, no other book presents a more balanced


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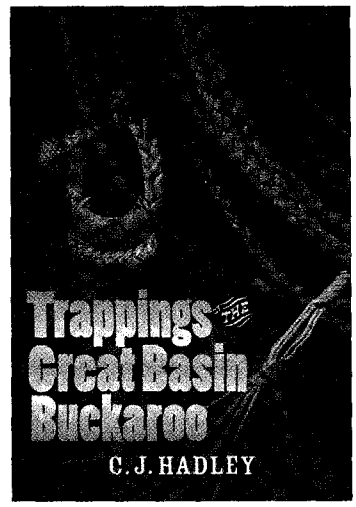


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—*Journal of the West*

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view of Gen. Custer, the Battle of the Little Bighorn and the Plains Indians.

## The Texas Rangers

By Walter Prescott Webb (1935)

This is the first serious effort at providing a complete history of this world famous law organization. Webb attempts to provide an accurate history, but his bias against minorities is evident. Yet Webb's book remains a classic because, as he said in 1958, "Like Parkman I went to all the places where things had happened. I sought out the old men, still living then, who had fought Comanches and Apaches, killed Sam Bass at Round Rock, and broken up deadly feuds inherited from the more deadly reconstruction. . . . I listened to the tales told by men who could talk without notes." To bring balance to Webb's work, read Robert Utley's *Lone Star Justice.*

## Tombstone: An Iliad of the Southwest

By Walter Noble Burns (1927)

A highly readable account of Tombstone, Arizona, and its characters, Burns' book makes heroes of outlaws such as John Ringo and was one of the first to portray Earp as the hero who saved Tombstone. Despite the accolades, Burns' book incensed the real-life Wyatt Earp, who was interviewed by Burns under the pretense that the story was about Doc Holliday.

## The Trail Drivers of Texas

By J. Marvin Hunter (1920-1923)

Hunter's books (originally published in two volumes) chronicles the adventures drovers faced while driving cattle up Texas trails to Northern markets. Because these stories were gathered when the trail drivers were older, they suffer the weaknesses of memory. Without this work, however, much of the early history of the American cattle industry would have been lost.

## Vanished Arizona

By Martha Summerhayes (1908)

This is the best interpretation of old Arizona Territory, written by a young bride who traded her Victorian lifestyle to be an army wife. It is a touching account of a woman who suffered childbirth alone, raised two children in dozens of forts and while being transported through hostile territory, feared her husband more than the Indians. After reading her book, Frederic Remington wrote to Martha, "I say—now suppose you had married a man who kept a drug store—see what you would have had and see what you would have missed."

## The Vigilantes of Montana

By Thomas Dimsdale (1866)

A Vigilante apologist, Dimsdale published Montana's first book after serializing it in the *Montana Post,* of which he was editor-in-chief. Dimsdale's controversial tale praises the citizens who take matters into their own hands, including the hangmen who slipped the noose around Sheriff William Plumer's neck.

## The Virginian

By Owen Wister (1902)

It's certainly dated, but Teddy Roosevelt loved it at the time it was published, and Zane Grey, Max Brand, Louis L'Amour and every Western novelist since owes this native Pennsylvanian his or her thanks for creating the Western genre as we know it.

## Wah-to-Yah and the Taos Trail

By Lewis H. Garrard (1850)

A caravan led by trader Ceran St. Vrain transported 17-year-old Garrard from Missouri to Taos, New Mexico. He arrived just in time for the 1847 revolt, during which Gov. Bent was killed. Garrard's is the only eyewitness account of the trial and subsequent hangings of those convicted. Not to be missed is the tale of John L. Hatcher, who meets the devil at Wah-to-Yah, the Indian name (meaning Breasts of the Earth) for the regions beneath the Twin Spanish Peaks, north of Raton Pass.

## Wyatt Earp: Frontier Marshal

By Stuart N. Lake (1931)

Although the world of Earp Mania by and large picks this book apart, this book is what started it all. Without the correspondence Lake had with Earp, all the research and discoveries that have since come about would have probably never seen the light of day. Is Lake's laudatory biography of Wyatt Earp historically accurate? No. But no other book about an Old West figure has had more impact on American popular culture.

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By J. Evetts Haley (1929)

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*"Never judge a book by its movie."*

**- J.W. Eagan**



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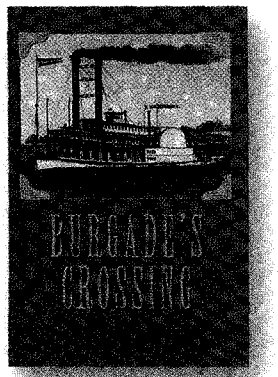


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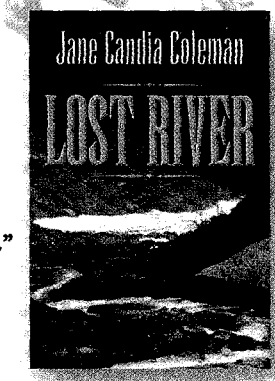


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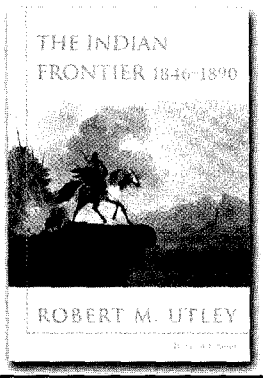


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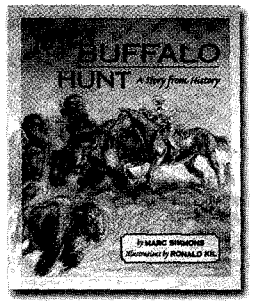


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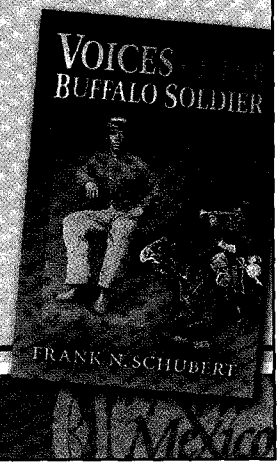


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BY JOHNNY D. BOGGS

# Judgment at Jacksboro

*The State of Texas vs. Satanta and Big Tree.*

Throngs of people descended upon Jacksboro, Texas, on a hot summer day in 1871 to witness a murder trial. Murders were commonplace in reconstruction Texas, but this would be no ordinary event. Cause No. 224 (actually two trials held July 5-6) would be the trial of the century.

Facing the gallows were Kiowas Satanta and Big Tree, the first Indians to be tried under white civilian law. Of course, there was no way two Kiowas could receive a fair trial in Indian-ravaged Northwest Texas. On the other hand, it was equally obvious that Satanta and Big Tree were guilty.

Satanta was in his early to mid-50s and Big Tree was about 19 or 20 when they joined prophet and medicine man Maman-ti, Satank and several other Indians as they left their reservation near Fort Sill, Indian Territory. On the Salt Creek Prairie between Belknap and Jacksboro, the warriors waited. Bowing to Maman-ti's vision, the Indians let a military ambulance and mounted riders pass unharmed on May 17. The following afternoon, with a storm brewing, the raiders attacked a train of 10 wagons and 12 teamsters hauling corn. The men were employed by Capt. Henry Warren, who had a government contract delivering supplies to frontier forts.

***Big Tree and Satanta were tried for murder after participating in the Warren wagon train raid.***

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For the Kiowas, the raid was a moderate success. They suffered a handful of casualties but made off with 41 mules, assorted plunder and six scalps (seven teamsters had been killed, but one was bald).

The ambulance Maman-ti let safely pass on May 17, however, had carried a distinguished passenger: Gen. William T. Sherman, who was touring the Indian frontier and had been on his way to Fort Richardson at Jacksboro. Two teamsters—including wounded Thomas Brazeal—stumbled 20 miles through the rain to report the attack. When Sherman heard Brazeal's story, he immediately ordered Col. Ranald S. Mackenzie of the Fourth Cavalry to pursue the attackers.

Sherman went on to Fort Sill, where with help from Lawrie Tatum, an Indian agent and conscience-troubled Quaker, and Col. Benjamin Grierson's 10th Cavalry, Sherman arrested Satanta, Big Tree and Satank after Satanta admitted taking part in the raid. Maman-ti managed to escape Sherman's net.

Both Sherman and Tatum believed punishing the Indians with the threat of hanging would decrease raids into Texas. "These three Indians should never go forth again," Sherman wrote. "If the Indian Department objects to their being surrendered to a Texas jury, we had better try them by a Military Tribunal, for if from any reason in the world they go back to their tribes free, no life will be safe from Kansas to the Rio Grande."

Mackenzie arrived on June 4 and departed with the three Kiowa prisoners four days later. In the lead wagon was the leader of the Koiet-senko warrior society—Satank, who was described by an *Army and Navy Journal* correspondent as "a hoary-headed old sinner sixty years of age or thereabout, grown gray in iniquity and deeds of blood."

Covering himself with a blanket, Satank began singing his death song. Using a knife he had procured and his teeth, the warrior slipped free of his manacles. Less than a mile from the fort, he wounded a guard with the knife and grabbed a carbine before being shot to death, "preferring," one newspaper said, "to die like a warrior than to enter the spirit-land by a dogs death at the end of a rope."

On June 15, Mackenzie's cavalrymen and the two remaining prisoners arrived at Jacksboro to cheers from soldiers and civilians, and music from the regimental band. Satanta and Big Tree were confined at the fort.

Not everyone, however, seemed overjoyed at the prospects of such a monumental trial.

Eight lawyers—including Samuel W.T. Lanham and Thomas Ball—petitioned Judge Charles Soward of the 13th Judicial District, requesting court not be held at Jacksboro because of the Indian threat.

The petition was denied. Lanham served as prosecutor and Ball was one of the defense attorneys when the court met in the two-story courthouse July 1. On July 4, an indictment was handed down against Satanta and Big Tree for the murder of the seven teamsters. The trial began the following day.

School was dismissed, and people flocked to the courthouse's top floor, where the case would be heard. Satanta and Big Tree arrived from Fort Richardson in a wagon, surrounded by soldiers to prevent anyone from shooting the



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*Fort Richardson, c. 1872, looking south. Capt. Robert G. Carter made the marks on the photo. The adjutant's office was at the far left and the enlisted men's picket quarters are in the foreground across from Lost Creek. Inset is Col. Ranald S. Mackenzie, who transported the prisoners to Fort Richardson prior to their trial in Jacksboro.*

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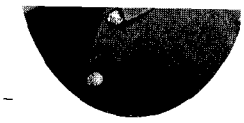
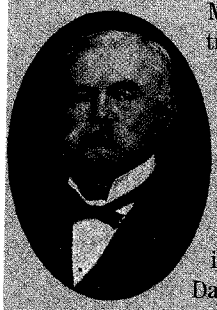


## Who's Who in the Trial of the Century



*Prosecutor Samuel Willis Tucker Lanham.*

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Much has been written about Satanta and the trial, but often overlooked are the white principals.

**The Court**

**Judge Charles Soward** was born in Kentucky in 1836, but had moved to Missouri by 1850. He was admitted to the bar in Canton, Missouri, in 1860, and left for Texas in 1867. Three years later, Gov. Edmund J. Davis appointed Soward judge of the "Jumbo" district comprising Parker, Jack, Palo Pinto, Hood and Johnson Counties.

**The Prosecutors**

**Samuel W.T. Lanham** served as prosecutor, with **W.M. McConnell** acting as second chair against Big Tree and **Captain C.L. "Charley" Jordan** assisting against Satanta. A veteran of the Third South Carolina Infantry, Lanham had married Sarah Meng in 1866, and they moved to Texas, where they taught school and he studied law. Admitted to the bar in 1869, he began practicing in Red River County, and Gov. Davis appointed him attorney of the "Jumbo" district. The Indian trial began one day after his 25th birthday.

**The Defense Attorneys**

Soward assigned **Thomas Ball** and **Joseph A. Woolfolk** as defense attorneys. Ball had attended William and Mary College and was admitted to the Virginia bar in 1858. He practiced law until receiving a lieutenant's commission in the 47th Virginia Infantry in 1861. In 1869, he moved to Texas.

Kentucky native Woolfolk was educated at St. Mary's College, the University of Missouri and the University of Louisville law school. He first arrived in Texas in 1858 as a surveyor and served as Young County clerk until the Civil War broke out. He was elected second lieutenant of a ranger company stationed at Fort Belknap but later received a commission in the Confederate Army. He married Elizabeth Lewis in 1865 and entered his uncle's law office in Louisville, Kentucky, after the war. Two years later, Woolfolk moved his family to Texas, where he farmed and ranched while also practicing law.



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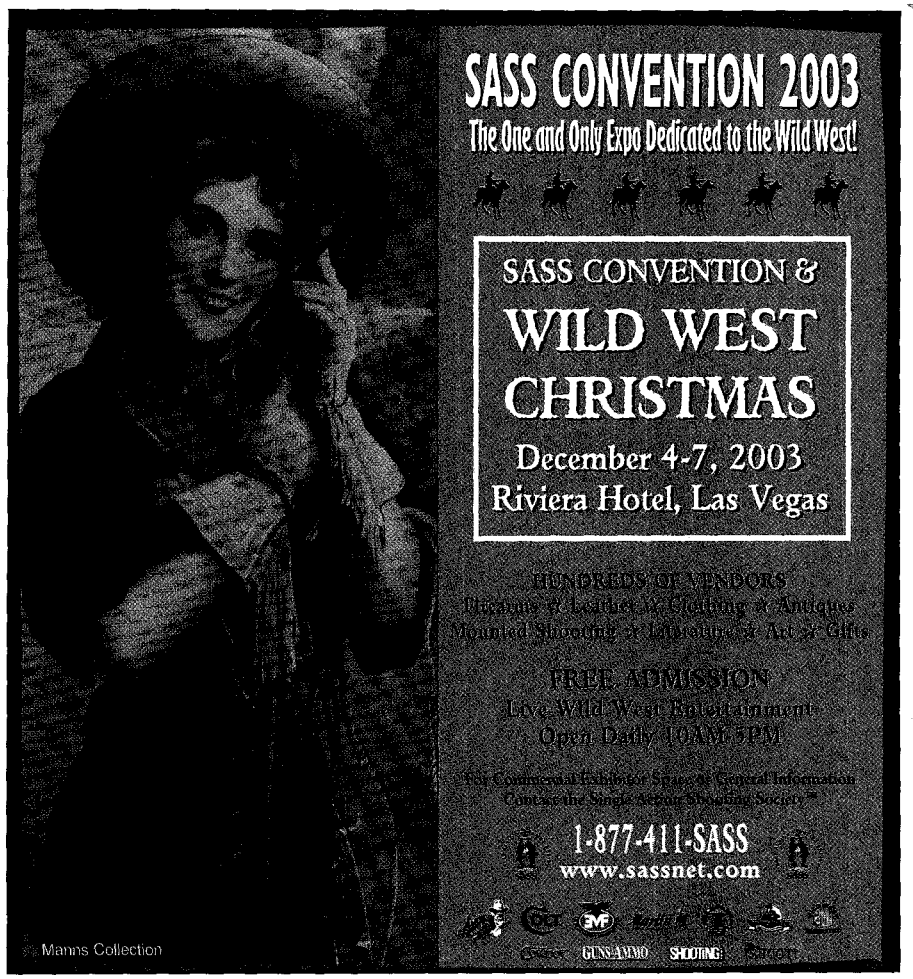


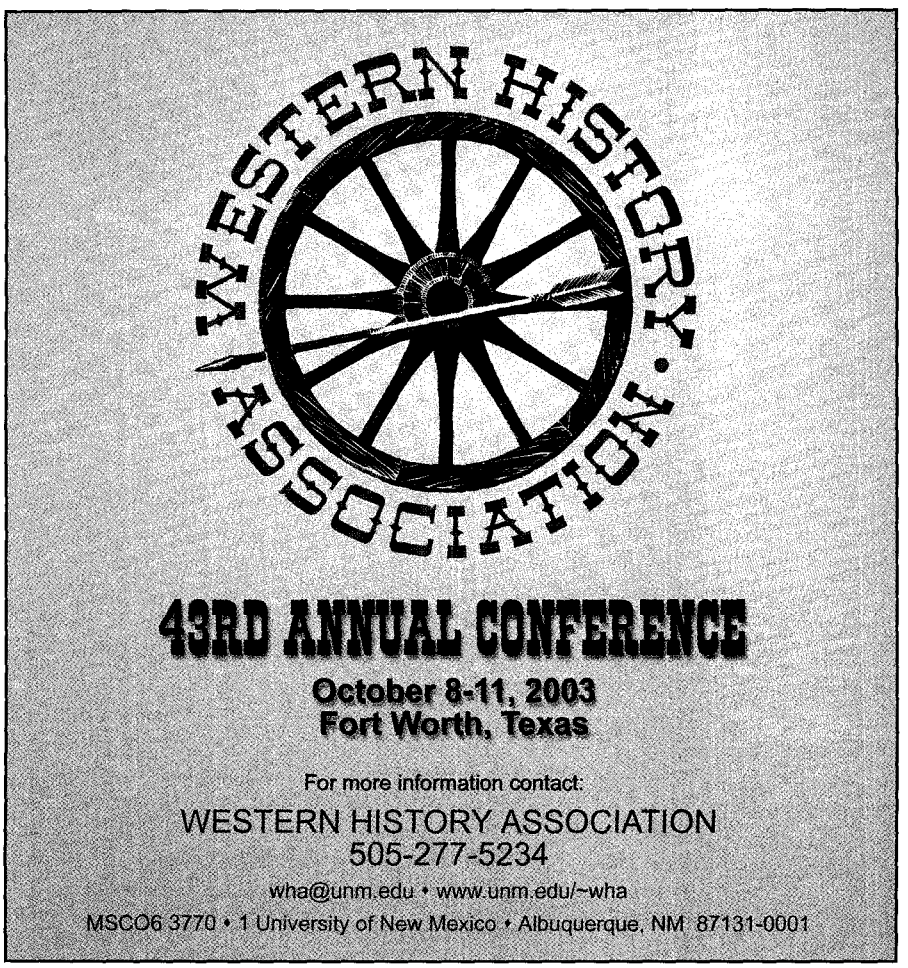



prisoners. At 8:30 a.m., court was called into session.

The defense first entered a motion that the state had no right to try the Kiowas because the Indians were wards of the federal government. Soward rejected the argument, but granted the defense's next motion to sever the trials. Big Tree would be tried first.

Ball opened the case with a plea for compassion. The *Dallas Herald* noted his "speeches were at some points most eloquent, and displayed not only a thorough knowledge of the Indian character," but also proved Ball to be a great orator. In the stifling courtroom, he removed his coat as he described the wrongdoings done against Indians since the time of Spanish explorers. He finally asked the jury to let Satanta and Big Tree "fly away as free and unhampered" as an eagle. When this was translated for the Kiowas by Fort Sill interpreter Horace Jones, the Indians grunted and nodded.

Jones, Col. Mackenzie, teamster Brazeal, Sgt. Miles Varily and agency interpreter Mathew Leeper testified for the prosecution. Brazeal told the jury of the attack, Varily identified Kiowa arrows found at the site and Leeper—testifying on behalf of Indian agent Tatum—told how Satanta had boasted of leading the raid. Ball and Joseph A. Woolfolk asked few questions and called no witnesses for the defense. By early afternoon, it was time for closing arguments. If Ball had wowed spectators with his opening oratory, Prosecutor Lanham did the same in his closing.

"This is a novel and important trial, and has, perhaps, no precedent in the history of American criminal jurisprudence," he began. The understatement and politeness ended there.

Lanham noted the defendants' "crude and barbarous appearance; the gravity of the charge; the number of the victims; the horrid brutality and inhuman butchery inflicted upon the bodies of the dead." He called Satanta "the arch of fiend of treachery and blood . . . the inciter of his fellows to rapine and murder, " while Big Tree was



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a "tiger-demon who has tasted blood and loves it as his food—who stops at no crime how black soever."

It took the jury half an hour to come back with a guilty verdict. Court was adjourned. Satanta would get his day in court the following day.

Witnesses and testimony were predominantly the same. Yet, the testimony of Jones, reported the *Dallas Herald*, was "more conclusive and direct than that against Big Tree he having, before arrest, harangued his tribe and said: 'Let no Chief claim the credit of killing those seven men in Texas, I am the Big Chief that did that killing.'"

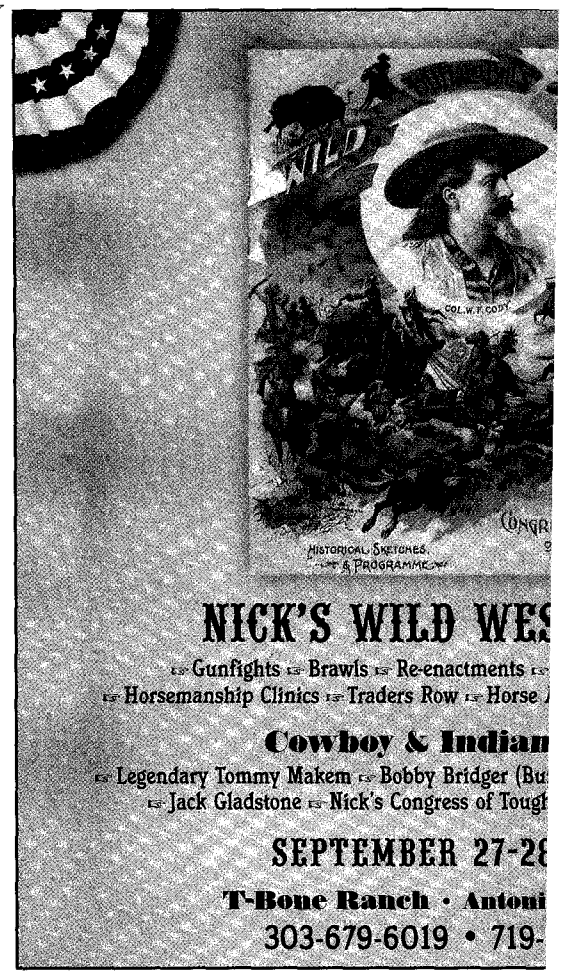
This time, however, the defendant testified on his own behalf. Satanta, speaking in Comanche interpreted by Jones, pleaded:

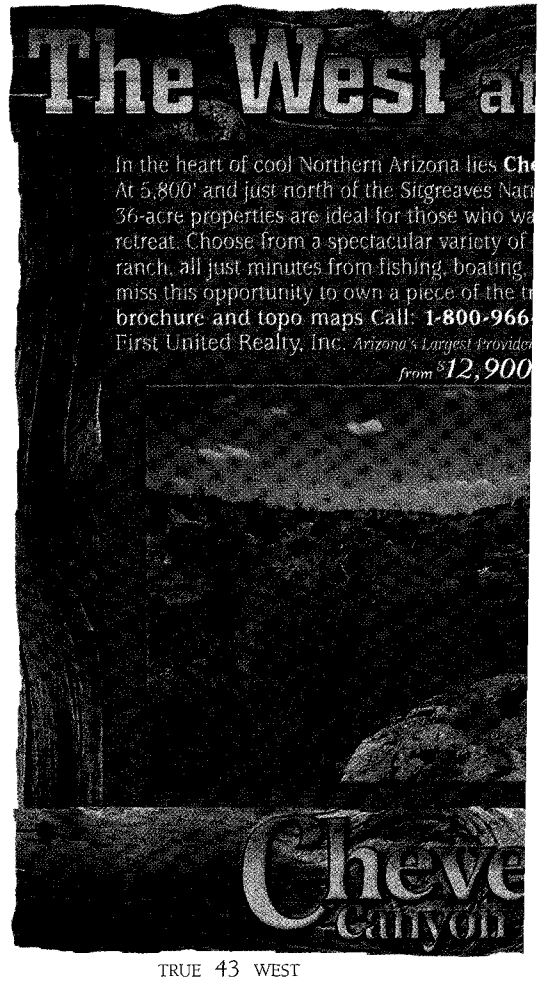
"I have been abused by my tribe for being too friendly with the white man. I have always been an advocate of peace. I have always wished this to be made a country of white people. . . . This is the first time I have ever faced Texans. They know me not—neither do I know them. If you let me live, I feel my ability to control my people. If I die it will be like a match put to the prairie. No power can stop it."

Satanta promised peace if released, and even said he would personally kill some war-minded Kiowas. The jury, however, found Satanta guilty and sentenced him to death.

The trial of the century was over, but it didn't end there. Bowing to political pressure and fearing Kiowa retaliation if the death sentences were carried out, Soward wrote Gov. Edmund J. Davis on July 10, pleading with him to commute the sentences to life imprisonment. Davis agreed, and on October 16, Satanta and Big Tree were transported to the state penitentiary in Huntsville.

Following the trial, Woolfolk continued practicing law while improving his farm and ranch operation on the Brazos River. Ball went on to become a state senator and assistant attorney general of Texas, but the trial propelled Lanham into the statehouse. He served as Texas governor from 1903-1907, and was the last Confederate veteran to hold that position.



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Satanta and Big Tree were paroled in 1873. An infuriated Sherman wrote Davis "that I believe Satanta and Big Tree will have their revenge, if they have not already had it, and that if they are to have scalps that yours is the first that should be taken."

Big Tree, however, settled down. He worked on a supply train after his parole, helped establish the Rainy Mountain Indian Mission and joined the church in 1897, serving as a deacon until his death in 1929.

Satanta, on the other hand, took part in the Red River War of 1874-75, and was shipped back to Huntsville after he surrendered. Other Kiowa leaders were also punished, such as Maman-ti—the real leader behind the Warren wagon train raid. Maman-ti was sent to Fort Marion in St. Augustine, Florida, where he died of consumption in 1875.

Satanta's health quickly faded in prison. Told that he had no chance of parole, he said, "I cannot wither and die like a dog in chains." The following day, October 11, 1878, he slashed himself and was taken to the second-story prison infirmary to stop the bleeding. Left alone, he jumped from the landing to his death.

In many ways, the Kiowa trial became a catalyst for the demise of the Quaker Peace Policy on the reservations and the defeat of the Kiowa nation. As historian Allen Lee Hamilton writes: "Many raids were far more destructive in terms of lives lost and property destroyed than the one that struck Henry Warren's wagons on May 18, 1871, but few if any have had more far-reaching effects."

**Johnny D. Boggs'** historical novel of the Kiowa trial, *Spark on the Prairie,* is available from Signet books.

*"Here they come, don't speak English, grunt and for Pete's sake, hide that Wal-Mart label . . . "*

## What Caused the Warren Wagon Train Raid?

In October 1867, Satank (Sitting Bear) and Satanta (White Bear), as representatives of the Medicine Lodge Treaty council, signed a peace agreement restricting the Plains tribes to reservations near Fort Sill, Oklahoma. But the encroachment by Western emigrants reduced the size of the Kiowa reservation and also threatened to destroy the buffalo herds.

"A long time ago this land belonged to our fathers; but when I go up to the [Arkansas] river I see camps of soldiers on its banks. These soldiers cut down my timber, they kill my buffalo; and when I see that my heart feels like bursting," Satanta said at the treaty, as *The New York Times* reported on November 20, 1867.

The Army defaulted on many provisions agreed to during the Medicine Lodge Treaty, such as shortchanging Indian rations, not arresting white outlaws who stole Indian property and allowing free, destructive rein to professional buffalo hunters.

***Satank died fighting rather than face trial.***

– Courtesy National Archives –

In 1868-69, Gen. Philip H. Sheridan's brutal winter campaign forced the Indians to return to their reservations after their homes and horses were destroyed. Rumors of Lt. Col. George A. Custer's troops killing Cheyenne women and children along Oklahoma's Washita River in November 1868 caused Satanta and Lone Wolf to surrender. They were arrested, nearly hanged by the general and rescued by Kicking Bird, who promised that the Kiowas would cease their raids and remain on the reservation.

In 1871, inadequate provisions overruled the Kiowas' fear of army retribution and they again set off to raid settlers. The Warren wagon train attack on May 18, 1871, ignited outrage across the frontier, and Big Tree and Satanta were sent to trial for murder.

The trial of Satanta and Big Tree was the beginning of the end for the Quaker Peace Policy, as the army eventually succeeded in forcing Indians onto reservations. And by the close of the 19th century, fewer than 1,000 buffalo roamed the West as they neared extinction. Only two of the four subspecies survived. Today, Plains Indian tribes are raising buffalo herds in an attempt to reawaken the buffalo's importance to their culture.

**—Meghan Saar**



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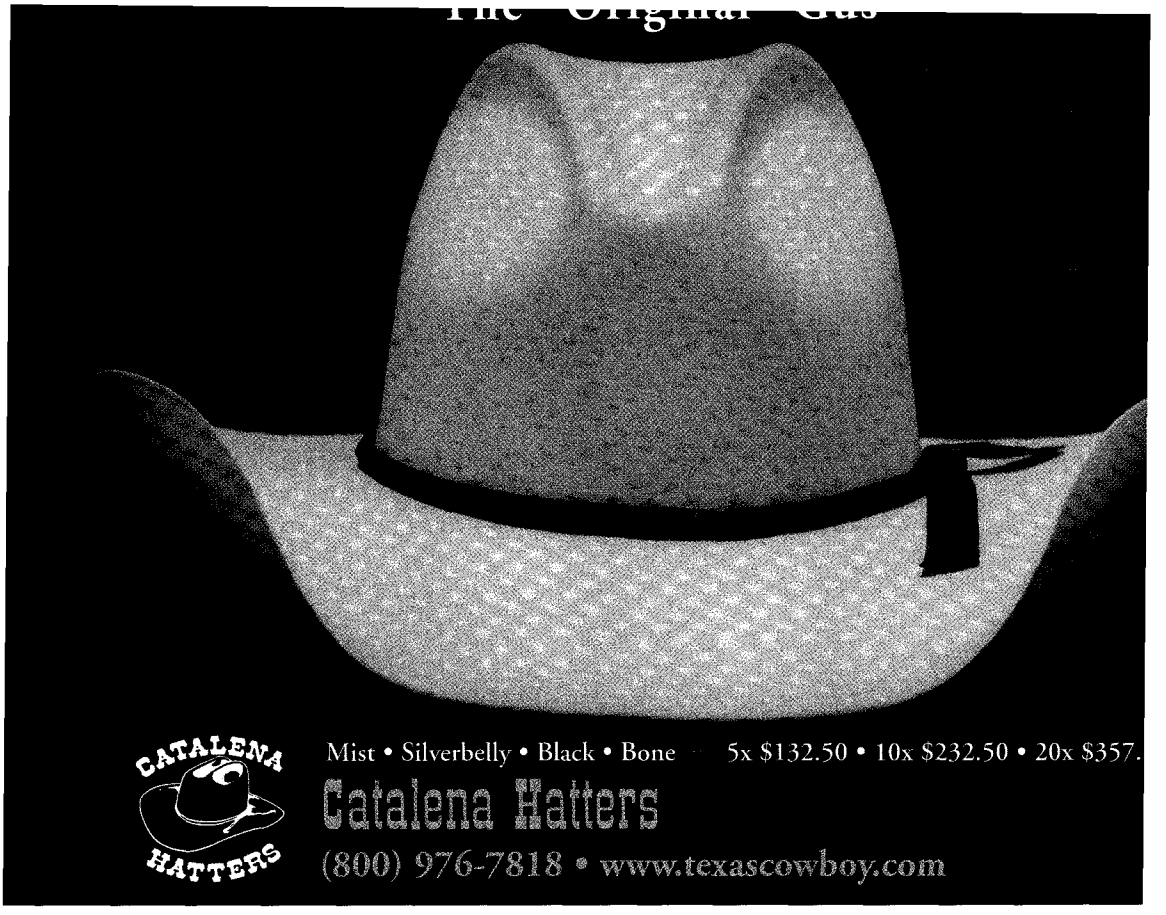


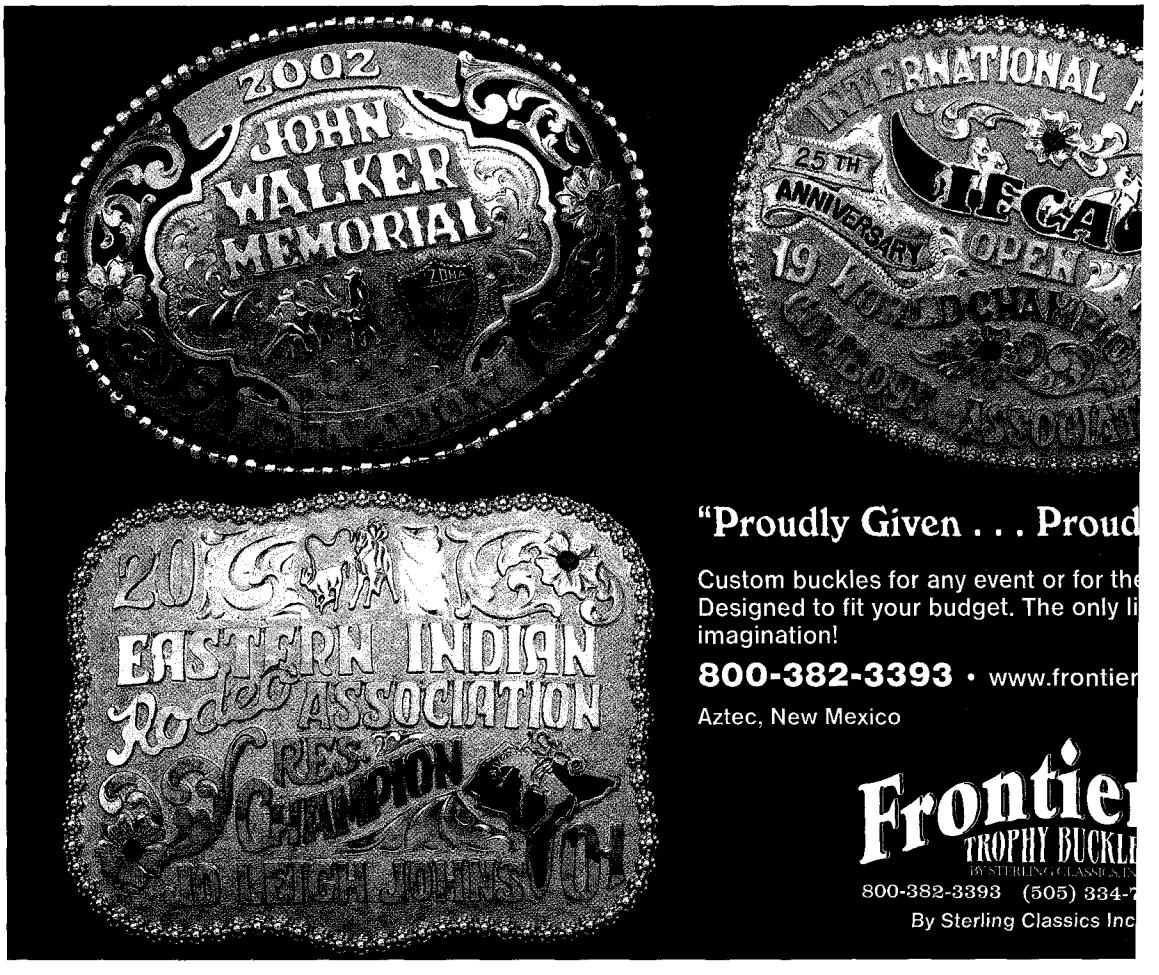





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BY JANA BOMMERSBACH

# From Shovels to DNA

*The inside story of digging up Billy.*

You could hear the two shots all over Lincoln, New Mexico: noon, April 28.

The date is historic: on that day in 1881, history tells us Billy the Kid broke out of the Lincoln County Jail, shooting to death Deputies James Bell and Bob Olinger.

On that day in 2003, the re-enactment shots launched an investigation that has attracted international attention and promises to be a tourism bonanza for New Mexico: solving the mystery surrounding the life and death of Billy the Kid.

So even before the media caught on, the ranking officers of Lincoln County re-enacted the shots of April 28, 1881, in hope of eventually answering the question: where in the world did Billy get the gun he used to kill the deputies?

History says Olinger was in the Wortley Hotel, having dinner with five inmates when he heard the shots inside the jail that killed Bell. Leaving his prisoners behind, Olinger came running and was himself gunned down.

But can you hear a gunshot in the jail if you're in the hotel?

"We went to the jail at noon and closed all the windows," reports Deputy Steve Sederwall. "We shot off two blanks of black powder in the hallway. We had somebody at the Wortley Hotel, to see if you could hear the shots from there. People from the other side of town came running, wondering what was going on. It was so loud it shocked me; I'm a law officer and I've popped off a few in my day, but that was loud."

So Sederwall is satisfied that this piece of the historical story checks out. "Now we're working with the state police to do an entire crime scene," he notes, from examining the jail walls to see if there's a bullet hiding somewhere to taking up floorboards to see if any blood residue remains.

Step by step, Sederwall and Lincoln County Sheriff Tom Sullivan hope to pick apart and examine every aspect of the last days of Billy the Kid.

**What a question**

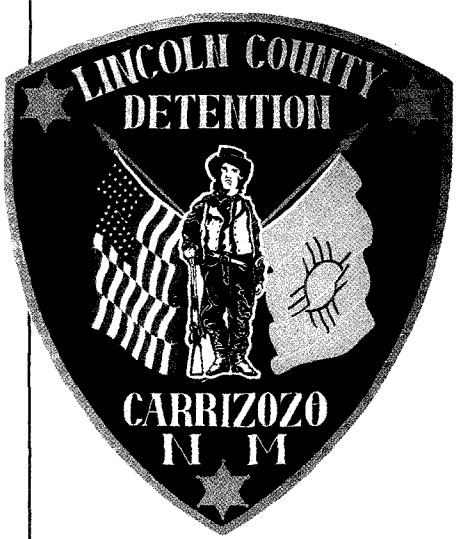
"They dug up Jesse James; they dug up Thomas Jefferson, why can't we dig up Billy?"

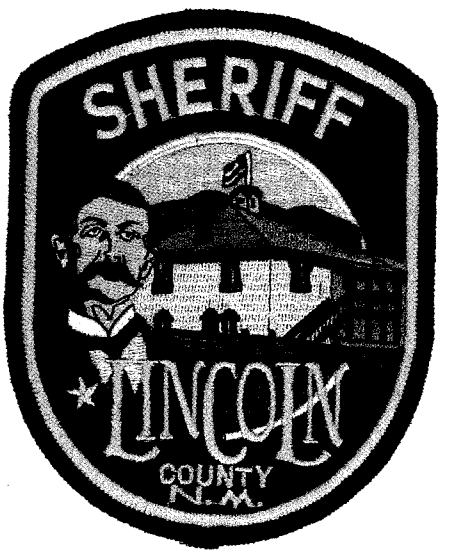
Sheriff Sullivan and Sederwall mused over that question during a horseback ride last spring.

Since then, all hell has broken loose. New Mexico Gov. Bill Richardson has joined the hunt, announcing the state will devote its expertise and resources to "shed new light on an old story."

The international media—from London to India—has come to Lincoln County to report on this spectacular Old West mystery: Did Billy the Kid die with a bullet in the heart shot by Lincoln County Sheriff Pat Garrett on July 14, 1881, or did he escape the sheriff and justice, and live out his life, dying of old age some 60 or 70 years later?

"This episode in the history of New Mexico and the history of the Old West is both fact and legend and continues to stir the imagination and interest of people all over the world," Gov. Richardson said. "By utilizing modern forensic, DNA




*Billy the Kid adorned the patch (far left) of Lincoln County deputy sheriffs for years, until Sheriff Tom Sullivan asked "Why do we have a cop killer on our sleeves?" That question led to the new patch picturing Old West lawman Pat Garrett (left). Now, if it turns out Garrett was a murderer, the deputies promise to rip him off their uniforms.*

– Courtesy Lincoln County Sheriff Department –



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and crime scene techniques, the goal of the investigation is to get to the truth. In the process, the reputation of Pat Garrett, still a hero to Lincoln County law enforcement, hangs in the balance."

Sheriff Sullivan, more than anyone, knows how important that truth will be. "Pat Garrett is the theme of this office," he stresses to *True West.* "I designed a patch with his likeness we wear on our uniforms, his image is on our patrol car."

He has always believed, still believes, Pat Garrett killed Billy in Fort Sumner that summer night. But if he didn't, if he killed someone else and passed him off as Billy, that makes Pat Garrett a murderer and a liar. Does Sheriff Sullivan believe he was? "Absolutely not," he says, "but we need to know the truth."

It wasn't so much a doubt as an uneasiness Sheriff Sullivan felt when he visited Hico, Texas, on the way to see his son last year, and toured a museum devoted to Brushy Bill Roberts, who lived to 1950 and claimed he was really Billy the Kid.

"I didn't tell anyone in the museum who I was, but when I walked outside, my wife told the museum lady I was the Lincoln County Sheriff and she said 'You better not tell the people around here that.' I still don't know what that means," he says with a laugh. "But later, someone from Hico came all the way over here to convince us Brushy was the real thing and when I told him I'd visited the museum, he said, 'everyone in Hico knows the sheriff was in town.'"

That trip convinced Sheriff Sullivan that the lingering doubts needed to be put to rest.

"I think the people in Hico are split 50-50 to know the truth or leave it alone. In our county, 90 percent want to know the truth," the Sheriff adds.

But there are many problems in getting to the truth.

In theory, the way to do it is this:

- Dig up the grave of Catherine Antrim in Silver City, New Mexico, who was the mother of the real Billy the Kid, and get a sample of her DNA. (There are suggestions Catherine was just a "great aunt," but Sheriff Sullivan and historians say Brushy spread that story to discredit her.)
- Dig up the Billy killed by Garrett and compare the DNA.
- Dig up Brushy to test his DNA against Catherine's.
- And while you're at it, dig up the Arizona contender to the title of the Kid, John Miller, who's buried in Prescott.

### But it's not that easy

The biggest problem is nobody is certain where the Billy who wears Pat Garrett's bullet lies in peace.

"I know the people in Fort Sumner are nervous," Sheriff Sullivan says. "They've got Billy's tombstone in a park up there and it's a real tourist attraction." What if that proves NOT to be Billy's grave—a situation many see as a probability more than just a possibility?

"I can guarantee you Billy's body isn't in that grave," says Arizona investigator Dale Tunnell. Tunnell says he's convinced that even if Billy at one time was buried in Fort Sumner (and he's not buying into the "official story" at all), the grave was either moved or flooded away. "Or else that's always just been an empty grave," he says.

*Lee Arnone (left) and Deputy Sheriff Steven M. Sederwall. Arnone is filming a documentary on the investigation and has already filmed the courthouse shooting, which showed the gunshots were indeed loud.*

– By Bob Boze Bell –

Not everyone is jazzed about the probe. Robert Utley, author of *Billy the Kid: A Short and Violent Life*, dismisses all the hoopla as "just a hobby of a retired cop."

Just as blunt is Marcelle Brothers, the webmaster and author of *About Billy the Kid* and a member of the advisory board for the Billy the Kid Outlaw Gang Organization. While she says she would love to see all the fictitious pretenders "discredited once and for all," she adds: "I'm completely against this silly project."

She tells *True West:* "First of all this whole thing is not about Billy the Kid, it's about Pat Garrett—it's more about saving Garrett's butt and squashing any allegations that he was a dishonest cop."

She notes so many gravesites are in question—including Catherine and Billy's official grave—that whatever DNA is collected will be iffy. "By using DNA that can't be proven to be from the right person, it won't end the controversy but add to it, " she notes. "So is this all really worth it or is the publicity just too tempting to pass up?"

Loretta Portillo, president of the Billy the Kid Historic Preservation Society, raises another objection: "We are concerned that irreplaceable, fragile landmarks will be damaged and for what? Just to prove that an imposter from Hico, Texas, was fibbing when he said he was the real Billy the Kid."

Meanwhile, the city council of Fort Sumner has unanimously opposed any attempt to dig up the grave in their city park.

But given the unusual amount of attention the 47th State is garnering over this, Gov. Richardson is moving forward. He expects public costs to be nominal, but is quick to add: "The benefits to our state and to the history of the West far outweigh any cost we may incur. Getting to the truth is our goal. But, if this increases interest and tourism in our state, I couldn't be happier."



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BY BOB BOZE BELL & FRED NOLAN

# A Billy the Kid Primer

*21 things you need to know about Billy.*

**1** Legend says he killed 21 men, one for each year of his life. How'd you like to be with Billy on New Year's Eve and he hadn't met his quota for the year? (His actual tally is closer to four.)

**2** The Kid never robbed a bank or a train. He never appeared on a wanted poster and he never stood in the street, daring another gunfighter to "draw."

**3** Billy's real name was Henry McCarty, which begs the question: how many movies would you go see about Henry the Kid? (Probably not 48.)

**4** Billy was bilingual and spoke fluent Spanish.

**5** Although legend says the Kid hailed from New York, he claimed Missouri as his home state on an 1880 census.

**6** One of the oddest places of residence ever claimed for the Kid is Anderson, Indiana (1868).

**7** The Kid was quite witty: "at least 200 men have been killed in Lincoln county during the past three years, but [I] did not kill all of them," he told a *Las Vegas Optic* reporter in 1881.

**8** When asked if he had learned anything, the Kid responded: "Advise persons never to engage in killing."

**9** On the train to Santa Fe after his capture, Billy impressed J. Fred Morley and other posse members by showing them "how far down he could bight [sic] on a piece of pie, you remember his long squirrel teeth."

**10** At 14, Billy was "the end man" in a minstrel show.

**11** Billy's teacher, Mary Phillipa Richards, claims he had an artistic nature, always helped with the chores and was no more of a problem than "any other boy growing up in a mining camp."

**12** While Billy was a busboy in Silver City, the hotel owner said the young man "was the only kid who ever worked there who never stole anything."

**13** After escaping jail in Silver City, where he was being held for stealing laundry, Billy fled to Arizona. He worked as a cook and stole saddles.

**14** Cowboy Gus Gildea described the young Kid as coming "to town dressed like a country jake with shoes instead of boots. He wore a six-gun stuck in his trousers."

**15** In 1877, Billy killed his first man at Camp Grant, Arizona, when a bully called the Kid "a pimp."

**16** Although movie after movie portrays Englishman John Tunstall as being a father figure to the Kid, Tunstall was 24 when they met.

**17** Tunstall paid the Kid $3 a day to be one of his armed cowboys. (The going rate for regular cowboys was $1 a day.)

**18** Billy was a slippery prisoner, escaping custody and capture almost a dozen times.

**19** Billy's M.O. when surrounded was to hold off his besiegers until dark and then make a break.

**20** Numerous *queridas* (girlfriends) said Billy was quite charming and an excellent dancer.

**21** Billy wasn't known as "Billy the Kid" until the last year of his life. (Previously, he had been known as Billy Kid and Kid Antrim.)

***Billy wore many hats in his life: among other things, he was a busboy, a cook, a cowboy and an outlaw.***

– Illustrations by Bob Boze Bell –



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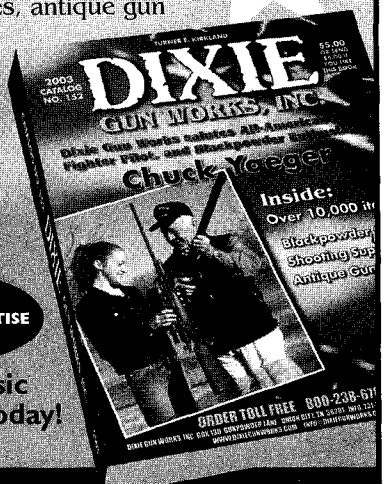


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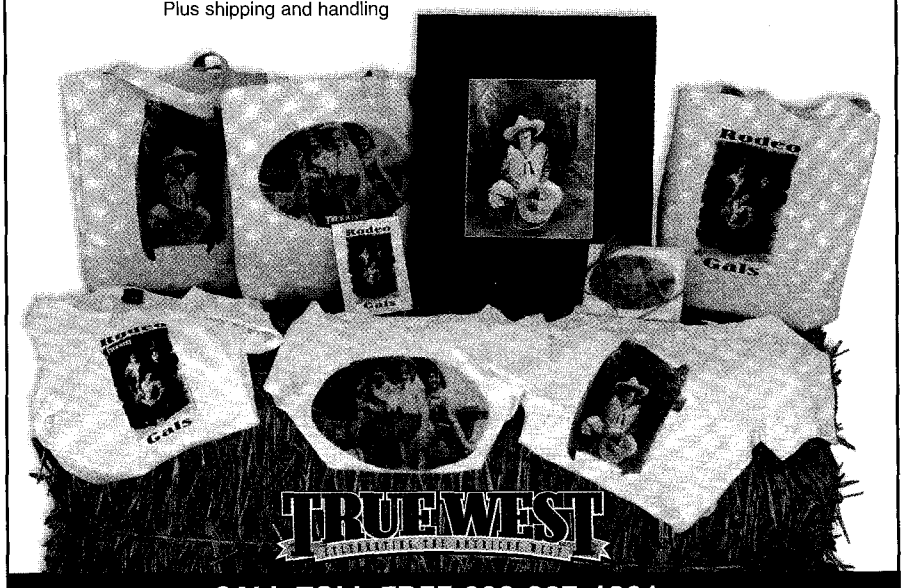


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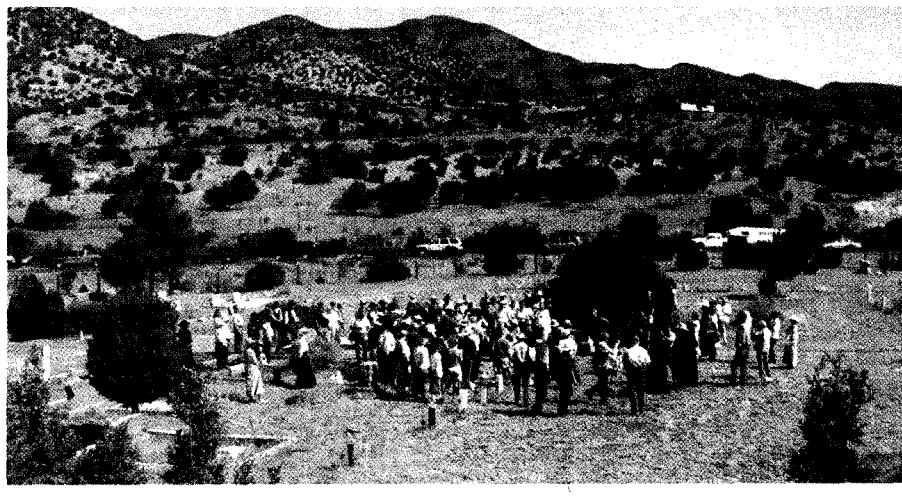
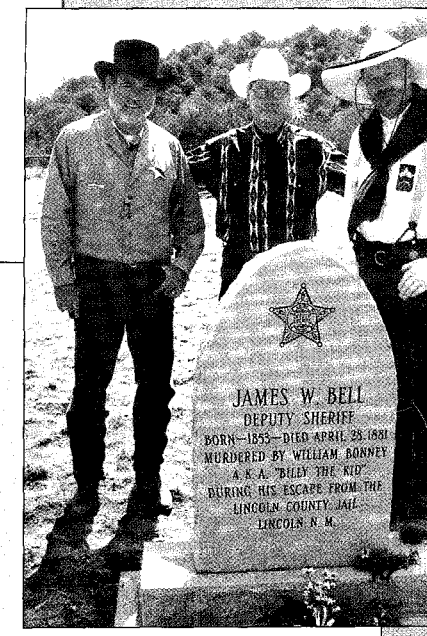
BY BOB BOZE BELL

# The Bell Tolls for Bell

*Searching for closure with an Old West namesake.*






***(Above) The gravesite ceremony around James W. Bell's new headstone at New Mexico's White Oaks Cemetery, July 19, 2003. (Right) Sheriff of Lincoln County Tom Sullivan (left) and his partner in the event, Capitan Mayor and Deputy Sheriff Steve Sederwall (right), stand next to Dr. Jannay Valdez, the director of the Billy the Kid (Brushy Bill) Museum in Hico, Texas.***

– BY BOB BOZE BELL –

By dying from Billy the Kid's hands on April 28, 1881, Deputy Sheriffs James W. Bell and Robert Olinger stoked Billy's legend to a white hot flame. Had Billy not murdered the two lawmen during his brazen escape from hanging, it's doubtful the Kid's story would be known today.

"It was more than an hour, after he killed Olinger and Bell, before he left," an eyewitness reported. "He told the people that he did not want to kill Bell but, as he ran, he had to. He said he grabbed Bell's revolver and told him to hold up his hands and surrender; that Bell decided to run and he had to kill him."

The Kid got the drop on Bell after they returned from an outhouse visit. Little else is known about the young lawman. No photos of him have been found, and even his gravestone has been missing for some time. (Several historians dispute this, claiming a headstone for Bell was at the site as recently as 1985.)

Although Deputy Bell was not a blood relative of mine, I still feel a connection to him. That's why I drove 11 hours to be at his gravesite this past July.

As a large crowd converged on the White Oaks Cemetery in New Mexico to commemorate a new headstone for Bell's grave, I wondered what he would think of all the hoopla. Perhaps he'd feel relief for finally receiving some recognition, or maybe he'd laugh heartily at the absurdity of it all.

Either way, rest in peace Deputy Bell. You've earned our respect and thanks.

As I mingled and chatted with the faithful gathered in front of the headstone, I suddenly remembered a line from the first *Young Guns* movie: "I'll make you famous," a giddy Billy says just before plugging another victim.

True, too true.

## Steve Sederwall on J.W. Bell's Jailhouse Shooting

On April 28, we opened the case. We wanted to see if a shot could be heard at the Wortley Hotel with all the windows closed in both buildings. Tom Sullivan and I stood in the jailhouse hall where the Kid stood and we fired off two quick rounds with a black powder pistol.

The gray smoke hung in the hallway and you could taste the air. The shots rattled the window like they would break and the wooden floor trembled under our feet. It was as if the fear that had been trapped in the walls for 122 years jumped out.

That fear Bell felt grabbed us both by the throat. The concussion of the shot bounced off the adobe and could be felt in our chests; our ears rang and those two shots boiled it all down for me. There were two kids in the stairway, fighting for their lives. Bell lost the fight and his life.

When we stood at his grave, that fear crawled back over me. Cops do not like to admit when our hearts are touched but ours were touched by this man we have only read about. If we do nothing else with this case, I'm happy we found where this deputy was buried and set a stone over his remains.



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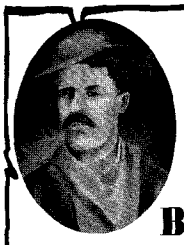

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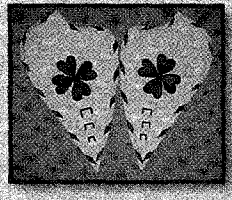
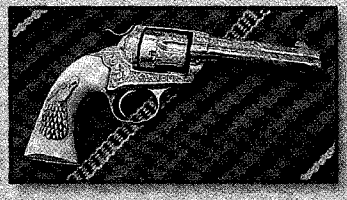

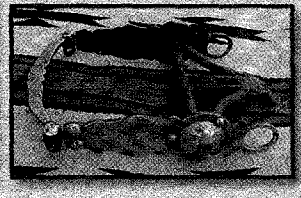
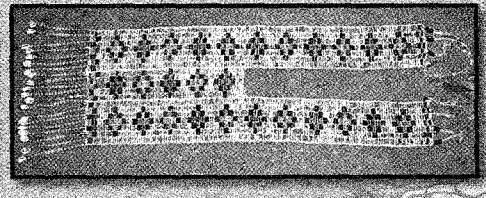
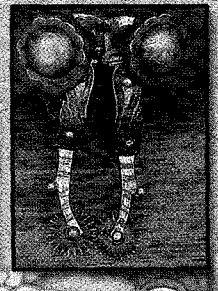




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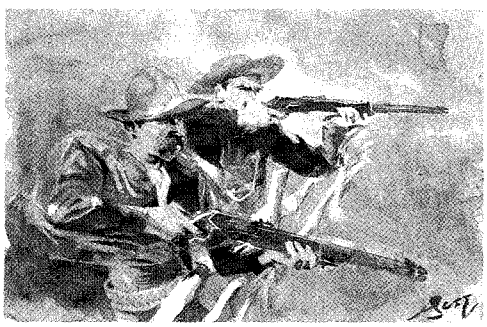
# An Eye For An Eye

## Bill Leonard & Harry "The Kid" Head vs Ike & Bill Haslett

### Wyatt Earp Misses Glory



***Ike and Bill jump up and fire.***

– Illustration by Bob Boze Bell –

"Such nice fellows. I believe they had been cow-boys, but had given up the business and abandoned that crowd and were trying to reform. One was night engineer and the other worked in the mine."

—From Nellie Pender's letter

*Tombstone Daily Epitaph,* June 22, 1881

BY BOB BOZE BELL

*Maps & Graphics by Gus Walker*

## JUNE 10, 1881 (FRIDAY)

Hiding out in the bootheel of Southwestern New Mexico, stage robber Bill Leonard and three cowboys—"rustlers"—are eating dinner in a store with "six-shooters alongside their plates and their rifles lying in their laps." Leonard is drunk and has been threatening he's going "to shoot the Haslett boys on sight," states an anonymous New Mexico correspondent in his June 12, 1881, letter to the *Tombstone Daily Epitaph.*

Warned of the death threats, brothers Ike and Bill Haslett go on the offensive and approach the store at daybreak. The Hasletts hide in a corral behind the store and wait for their prey to show.

Before long, Leonard rides toward the store on horseback with Harry "the Kid" Head walking by his side. When they are within 50 yards of the store, Ike and Bill jump up and open fire.

"Ike let drive and got Leonard just below the heart," states our anonymous *Epitaph* correspondent. As Leonard leans down to use his horse as a shield, Bill "plug[s] the horse" and Leonard falls to the ground.

Before Harry the Kid can pull his gun, "Bill Haslett [shoots] him in the abdomen." As Harry turns to run, both Hasletts begin "to pop it with him," putting "six balls in him."

Both outlaws die a painful death, as Leonard gets his wish from the previous night, when the correspondent overheard him say he "wished somebody would shoot him in the heart and put him out of his misery, as he had two holes in his belly that he got the time he tried to rob the stage at Tombstone."

## AFTERMATH: ODDS & ENDS

Wyatt Earp cut a deal with Ike Clanton to bring in the robbers of the Benson stage, who were reported to be Leonard, Crane and Head—Crane is sometimes spelled Crain (see wanted poster at right). If Clanton turned the outlaws over to Earp or lured them to a place where Earp could nab them, it was agreed that Clanton would receive the reward ($1,200 for each outlaw captured) and Earp, the glory. However, Leonard and Head were killed before the scheme could be carried out.

The Haslett brothers didn't collect the reward either. The third stage robber, James Crane, and his friends—15 or 20 cowboys, according to a local eyewitness—stormed into West McFadden's saloon and slaughtered the Hasletts and an innocent bystander, emigrant Sigman Biertzhoff, known locally as "Joe." After hearing the shooters ride off, locals Nellie and Jim Pender went to the saloon. Jim said he "never saw such a dreadful sight. The place was just running with blood." Bill Haslett was shot six times in his bowels; Ike, once in the head and innumerable times through his left hand; and Joe, six times in the stomach and once through his ankle.

James "Slim Jim" Crane was killed August 13, 1881, as he camped with Old Man Clanton and others in Guadalupe Canyon on the Arizona-New Mexico line. The attackers, believed to be Mexican militia, were never found, but that's another *Classic Gunfight.*

**We recommend:** The best account of this fight (and details are thin) is in Casey Tefertiller's *Wyatt Earp: The Life Behind the Legend.*

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## ARREST THE MURDERERS!

About 9 o'clock Tuesday evening, March 15, 1881, the stage bound from Tombstone to Benson was attacked by three men armed with Winchester rifles, at a point about two miles west from Drew's stage station, and Budd Philpot, the driver, and Peter Roerig, a passenger, shot and killed.

The attack was no doubt made for the purpose of robbery. The Territory and Wells, Fargo & Co. have a liberal standing reward for the arrest and conviction of persons robbing or attempting to rob the Express. In addition, the Governor and Wells, Fargo & Co. have each offered $300 for the arrest and conviction of each of the murderers of Philpot and Roerig, so that the rewards now offered amount to $1,200 or $1,400 each.

It is believed that the attempted robbery and murders were committed by Bill Leonard, Jim Crain and Harry Head, described as follows:

### BILL LEONARD.

American; about 30 years old; about 5 feet, 8 or 9 inches high; weight, 120 lbs.; long, dark, curly hair, when cared for hanging in ringlets down to shoulders; small, dark, boyish mustache, otherwise almost beardless; teeth very white and regular; dark eyes; small, sharp and very effeminate features; rather weak voice; left arm full of scars caused by injecting morphine; is subject to rheumatism; chews tobacco incessantly; speaks good Spanish; good shot with rifle and pistol; a jeweler by trade; is known in Silver City, Otero and Los Vegas, N. M.

### JAMES CRAIN.

American; about 27 years old; about 5 feet, 11 inches high; weight, 175 or 180 lbs.; light complexion; light, sandy hair; light eyes; has worn light mustache; full, round face, and florid, healthy appearance; talks and laughs at same time; talks slow and hesitating; illiterate; cattle driver or cow-boy.

### HARRY HEAD.

About 18 or 20 years old; 5 feet, 4 or 5 inches high, weight, 120 lbs.; chunky and well built; dark complexion; dark hair and eyes; rather dandyish; almost beardless; small foot and hand; good rider, and handy with rifle and pistol.

All mounted, and well armed with rifles and pistols, and the last trace of them they were going toward San Simon Valley.

If arrested, immediately inform Sheriff Behan and the undersigned by telegraph at Tombstone, A. T.

R. H. PAUL,
Special Officer of W., F. & Co.

Tombstone, A. T., March 23, 1881.

*Wanted poster for stagecoach robbers Bill Leonard, Harry Head and James Crane (Crain). They elude the law but die violently.*

– True West Archives –

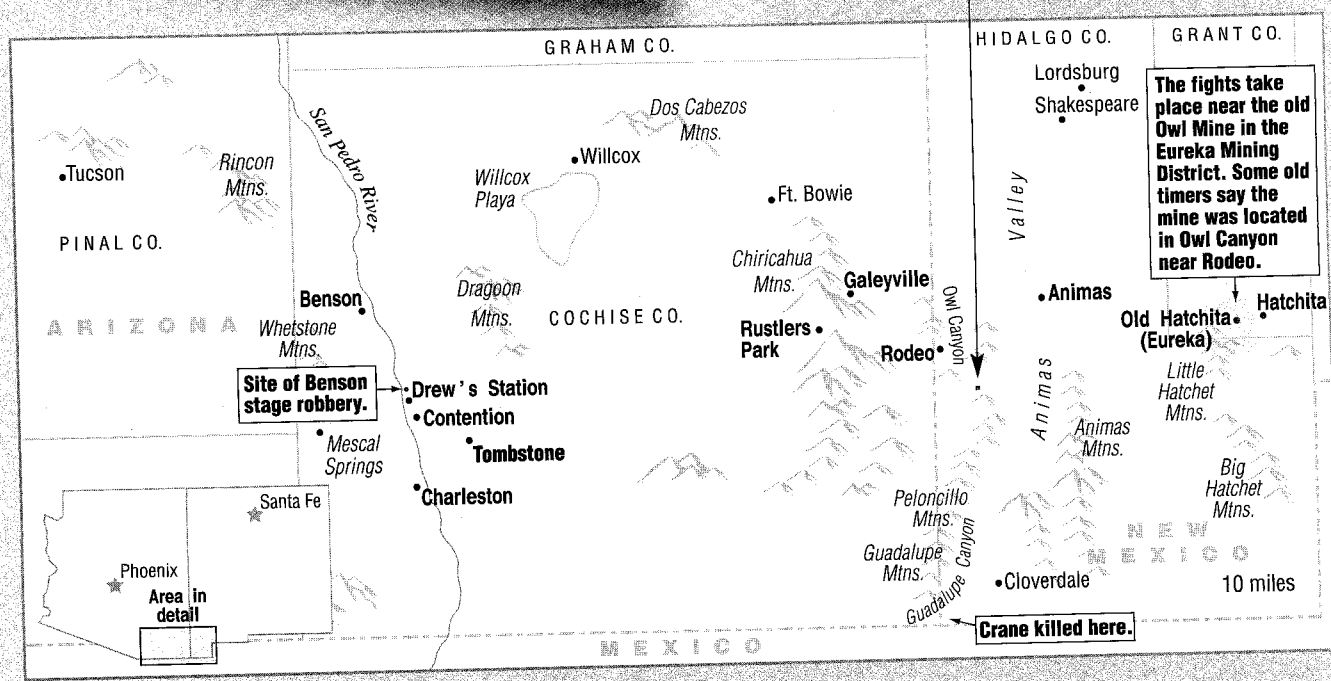
## THE HASLETT BROTHERS

Ike and Bill Haslett own one of the best ranches in the Animas Valley. "Old man Gray" of Tombstone bought two ranches from Curly Bill Brocius, which border the Haslett ranch on two sides. Gray and his cowboy confederates lust after the lush Haslett ranch. It becomes known that Gray and the cowboys want to run the Hasletts out of the country.

Ike and Bill die defending their spread. Evidently, they had left a will bequeathing everything to their father and sister in Kansas. Nellie Pender writes of their funeral, "It was a sorrowful sight to see those three coffins followed by all the men moving slowly through the camp." (The third coffin held Sigman Biertzhoff's body.)

## NOVEMBER 1880

*Ike Clanton and Johnny Ringo file a location notice for 320 acres in New Mexico's Animas Valley. The grazing and farming land is about 28 miles north of Guadalupe Canyon. The land will first be called Alfalfa or Cienega Ranch, then later, San Simon Cienega Ranch. It is often referred to as Joe Hill's Ranch.*



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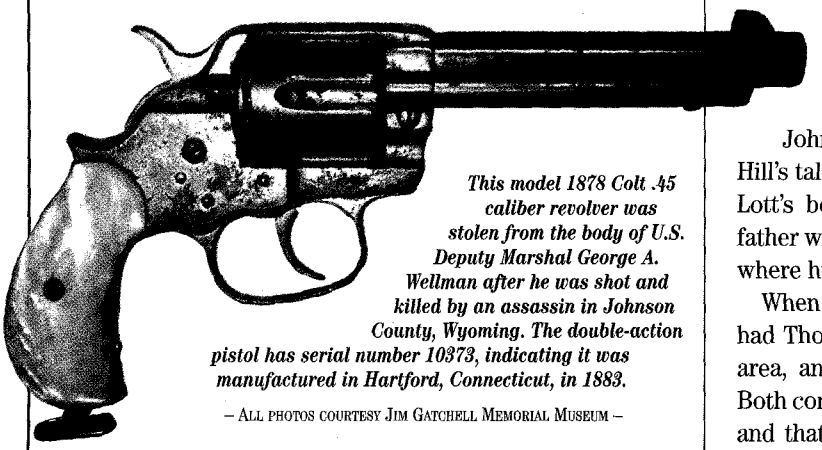
BY LARRY K. BROWN

# Truth Failed to Hide in a Tin

*A hidden gun helps solve an Old West murder.*

When his hired hand stomped off in a huff that chilled November day in 1895, foreman Jim Potts knew it would be up to him to take care of his band of sheep.

Potts headed to their grazing spot near the North Fork of the Powder River, just north of Kaycee, Wyoming. He watched his "woolies" work their way south across the range that had been recently brushed with a thin sheet of new snow, before he trudged toward three large sandstone buttes. From there, he thought he could best keep an eye on his flock.



*This model 1878 Colt .45 caliber revolver was stolen from the body of U.S. Deputy Marshal George A. Wellman after he was shot and killed by an assassin in Johnson County, Wyoming. The double-action pistol has serial number 10373, indicating it was manufactured in Hartford, Connecticut, in 1883.*

– ALL PHOTOS COURTESY JIM GATCHELL MEMORIAL MUSEUM –

As he made his way to the north side of the buttes, he found a large piece of caprock had split off. He spotted a space—about eight or 10 inches deep—that someone had neatly filled with small stones. As he plucked out the pebbles, he saw what looked like a rectangular piece of bright metal. At first, he thought it to be a gold brick, rumored to have been stolen in Nevada some months before, and then cached here in Johnson County. But as Potts dug deeper, he instead found a five-pound Prices Baking Powder can with a loose lid.

As he removed the tin, a bright-skinned, nearly new, nickle-plated, .45 caliber Colt revolver fell out. It had a lanyard swivel on the butt of its pearl-handled grip. From inside the tin, Potts pulled out a fistful of papers that had been shredded by varmints. Disappointed that he hadn't found gold, Potts pocketed the handgun and went back to watching his sheep. He had no idea his discovery would one day help solve a notorious murder.

## Four Decades Later

The revolver stayed in a bureau drawer at Potts' home for the next four decades, with few people, other than the family, knowing of its existence. Then in 1938, "Black Billy" Hill, a small-time rancher of questionable character, returned from Canada to visit. Johnson County Sheriff Martin A. "Mart" Tisdale took Hill, his deceased father's one-time friend, to visit his old ranch site.

According to the sheriff, Hill pointed to three isolated sandstone buttes that rose sharply from the plains and dropped a bombshell. It was there, Hill claimed, that notorious Red Sash Gang member Ed Starr said he had buried a gun and papers he took from U.S. Deputy Marshal George A. Wellman—after he had killed him.

When the lawman returned later that day to the Johnson County Courthouse in Buffalo, Wyoming, he told Hill's tale about the cached gun to an astonished Warren Lott. Lott's boss was County Treasurer J.W. "Joe" Potts, whose father was Jim Potts. Upon hearing the story, Joe told how and where his father had found a Colt revolver 43 years earlier.

When ex-Buffalo Mayor C.H. Burritt learned of the story, he had Thomas "Tommy" F. Carr, a one-time mail carrier in the area, and famed lawman Joe LeFors examine the weapon. Both confirmed that the gun had belonged to Marshal Wellman and that they had seen the sidearm many times on his hip. Burritt also asked Lora "Lorry" H. Reed—a billiard parlor operator—if he recognized the pistol. "That's it!" exclaimed Reed, who just before the murder had been one of Wellman's ranch hands. Reed assured the mayor that he not only remembered the gun, but even recalled a "circle on the left side" of its grip, which Burritt confirmed to be true. Not having a gun of his own at the time, Reed remembered that his admiration of the revolver was so great, "every chance he got, he would examine and fondle" it.

More than four decades after the pistol had been found by chance in the tin—Hill's casual aside would help solve one of the most mysterious murders in Old West history.

## Ambushed

George A. Wellman, a Canadian by birth, had hired on at the HOE Ranch and became its foreman in 1887. From that vantage point, he watched the growing bloodshed between ranchers and rustlers that became the Johnson County range war.

Wellman apparently bought his beloved Colt around July 20, 1889, after "Cattle Kate" Watson and her lover Jim Averell were hanged near Independence Rock, Wyoming, on suspicion of brand-running.

Their deaths began a series of murders and attempted



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*During the infamous Johnson County War, George A. Wellman was secretly enlisted as a U.S. deputy marshal to "assemble evidence to prove that the homes, ranches and herds of the stockman were being looted and rustled." On May 9, 1892, he was en route to Buffalo, Wyoming, when an assassin shot and killed him.*

murders among cow thieves and ranchers. On June 4, 1891, a group of thugs—presumably backed by ranchers—posed as lawmen and took Tom Waggoner, a reputed horse thief, from his home. Folks soon found Waggoner decorating a cottonwood branch near Newcastle, Wyoming. Five months later, on the Powder River, Nate Champion, another suspected cow thief, was almost murdered. That same month, assassins hid beneath a bridge some 15 miles south of Buffalo, and as 23-year-old Orley E. "Ranger" Jones rode by, they shot him to death. Soon thereafter, some seven miles north of where Jones had died, assassins left rancher John A. Tisdale stone-dead. Friends found the corpse of Mart Tisdale's dad in a pile of Christmas toys and supplies the old man had planned to take home to his family. By April 10, 1892, such depredations by both sides finally exploded into a full-scale war that raged for three days.

"[Johnson County is] a good place for fugitives from justice," Wellman once said. "There are more desperate criminals there than probably could be found in any place on earth. These men lead a riotous life. They are notorious gamblers, thieves and murderers, and none of them ever think of working for a living. The rough country enables them to carry on their depredations with a free hand. They steal unbranded and stray cattle—branded cattle, too, sometimes—and in that way they have been getting rich at the expense of the cattle owners. There has always been trouble between the two parties."

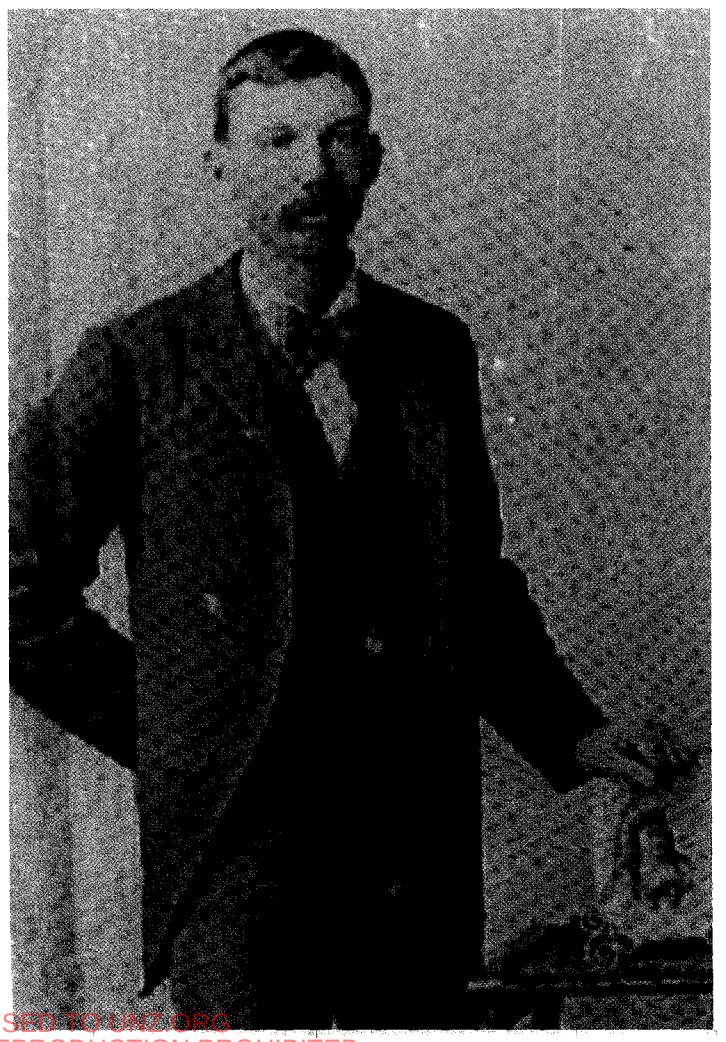
The cattlemen had tried time and time again to have these outlaws punished, but no matter how strong the evidence against them, it was impossible to secure conviction as the juries almost always decided against the cattlemen. The ranchers finally resolved to take the law into their own hands.

Accordingly, it's understandable why soon after Wellman went back East to wed Lucy C. Clark on April 21, he insured his life. It seems he also planned to quit the West, as he left his wife behind and told his family he intended to close up his affairs and move to Bay City, Michigan.

Soon after his return to Wyoming, Wellman teamed up with rancher Robert Lee Gibson, and they secretly swore oaths as U.S. deputy marshals to help stop the lawlessness. Presumably, Wellman's instructions were to "assemble evidence to prove that the homes, ranches and herds of the stockmen were being looted and rustled." That evidence would be sent to Washington D.C. and, it was hoped, would persuade President Benjamin Harrison to declare martial law in Johnson County.

The orders Wellman received were simple and to the point, and they may have worked, had he and Gibson not discussed them in a crowded bar.

Armed with his secret assignment, Wellman returned to his ranch, paid his wranglers and fired several suspected thieves, including Austin Reed and his 19-year-old brother, Lorry.



*"Black Billy" Hill was a small-time rancher of questionable character who fled to Canada during the Johnson County War. In 1938, he returned to Wyoming and told Sheriff "Mart" Tisdale that a thug by the name of Ed Starr had buried "the gun and papers he took off of Wellman" after Starr murdered Wellman. Starr was a member of the Red Sash Gang. The members were recognized by the red strips of cloth worn beneath their gunbelts.*

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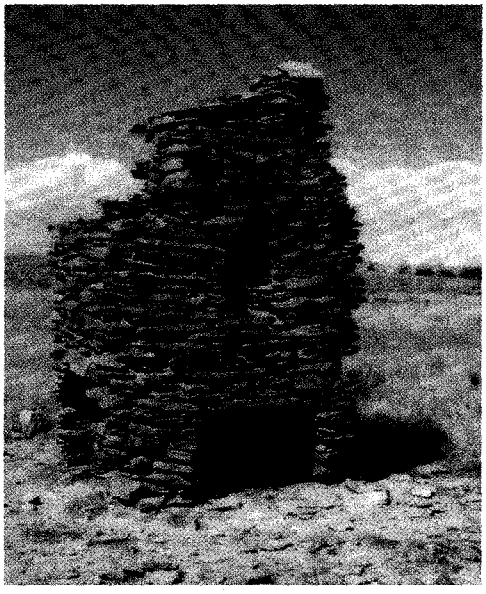


*All that remains of the large HOE Ranch is this double-stone chimney, which was built to heat two rooms from adjoining sides. The ranch was situated on the Powder River, 50 miles southeast of Buffalo, Wyoming, and was owned by Henry A. Blair, a wealthy man from Chicago. Wellman worked as ranch foreman from 1887 until his mysterious death in 1892.*

On the night of May 8, Wellman prepared for his trip back to Buffalo, taking along his prized pistol. He left the next morning with Thomas J. "Big Mouth" Hathaway, a 36-year-old ranch employee.

The two were approaching Nine Mile Divide when they heard shots. Hathaway later reported: "Well, I and Mr. Wellman was riding side by side . . . talking and the first thing I knew I heard a couple of shots just very quick right together like; made my horse jump so did Mr. Wellmans . . . and as I pulled up my horse I faced him [Wellman] and he threw up one hand and hollo'd; he did not hollo as though he was hurt, he holo'd like he was trying to hale somebody or simply as a man would hollo 'hey' at somebody and at that time there was two more shots fired right after that so close that I could not tell, and I started my horse on the run and got away from there. . . ."

Hathaway said he did not return to Wellman's body, because he "was entirely unarmed."

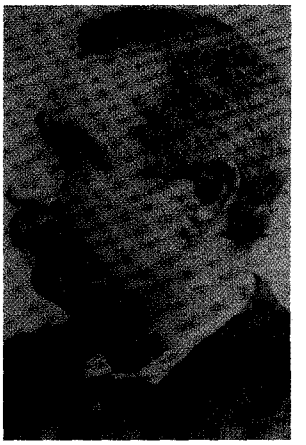
What Hathaway did not know is that soon after Wellman hit the ground, someone stole the lawman's pistol from his still warm body and rushed it from the scene.

## Red Sash Boys

It would take years for anyone to piece together what had happened. A decade after the killing, Mayor Burritt told of a ride he had with fellow herder Austin Reed, around 1892. Reed admitted he was present when members of the Red Sash Gang drew lots to determine who would kill Wellman. "It had been framed for Ed Starr to draw that ticket," Reed noted. "Starr was a killer and would as soon shoot a man as a coyote." In fact, Reed said that he "had often heard Starr imitate Wellman's cry when he saw he was going to be killed."

But perhaps the most damning evidence came from the mail carrier Tommy Carr, who said he had stayed at a ranch with the killers the night before they ambushed Wellman. The morning of the murder, he saw three men steal out of camp: "Black Henry" Smith, Ed Starr and Charles Dembrey.

Sworn testimony from the coroner's inquest after Wellman's murder helps paint a clear picture of what happened next. The tracks of the three men showed that one of them stayed out of sight with the horses, while the other two hiked to the ambush site. Cigarette butts wrapped in yellow corn-leaves, which were found at the site, verified the men had waited for Wellman.



*U.S. Marshal Joseph P. Rankin wanted U.S. President Benjamin Harrison to declare martial law in Johnson County, so he recruited Wellman to secretly serve as his deputy. Rankin was to report any alarming findings to the U.S. attorney in Cheyenne, Wyoming, who would pass the information on to Washington D.C.*

One gunman crouched behind some sagebrush, while the other hid in a gulch about 65 feet from the left side of the rut road. When Wellman and Hathaway came in sight, they were caught in a crossfire. It took but one .44 caliber Winchester rifle shot—apparently from the man on the hill—to do the job. Wellman died quickly as the slug severed his spinal cord, ripped through his vital organs and lodged beneath the skin of his chest.

After the gang members made sure of their kill and removed the Colt from Wellman's holster, they fled, knowing full well they could never show off their loot.

So they buried it. And it may have stayed hidden forever, if not for Potts' discovery of the baking powder tin.

**Larry K. Brown** of Cheyenne, Wyoming, is the author of *Petticoat Prisoners of Old Wyoming* and *Hog Ranches of Wyoming.*



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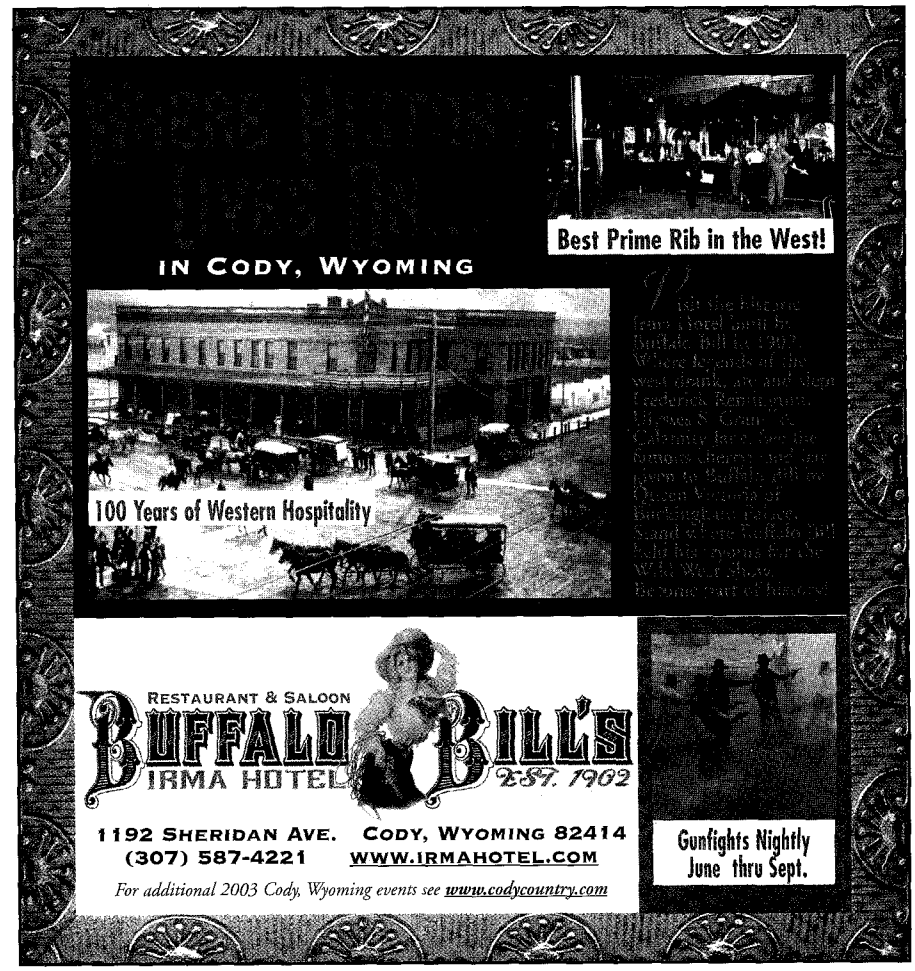


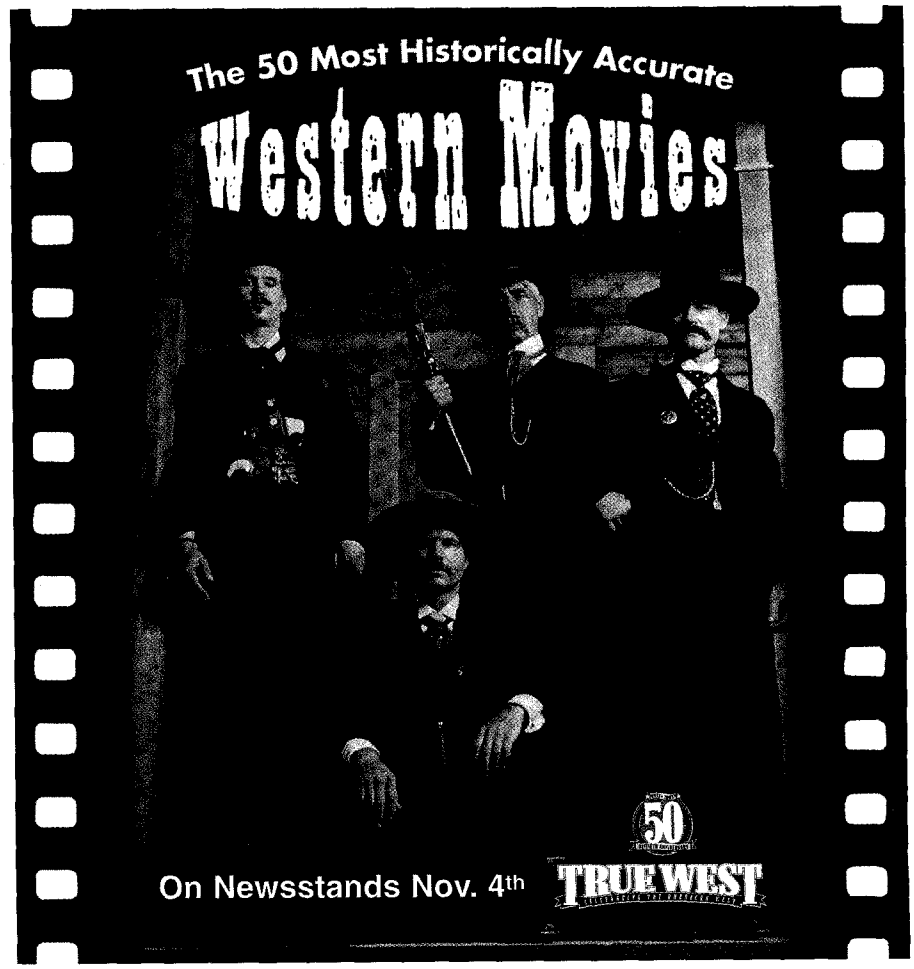





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BY TIM LASIUTA

# The Legend Continues

*NBC airs a new Butch Cassidy and Sundance Kid movie.*

Look out Western fans. Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid are riding back into motion pictures. NBC—in association with Viacom and Once Upon A Time Films—led by producers Stan Brooks and Greg Gugliotta and writer John Fasano (*Tombstone*) is presenting *The Legend of Butch and Sundance* for prime time television this fall.

"This project, from its inception, took on a life of its own," said Greg Gugliotta. Although Gugliotta and Fasano had never worked together before, when Gugliotta floated the idea of a Butch and Sundance telefilm by John Fasano, the writer jumped at the chance to pen an "end of an era" story about the last of the outlaw breed.

"The initial idea for the Butch and Sundance project came from some reading that I had done a couple of years ago," Fasano said. "I had read two books about Butch, one by his sister who claimed that he and Sundance had faked their deaths in Bolivia and had lived out their lives in the Pacific Northwest until the 1930s, and another that claimed that they had died in Bolivia after the shoot-out [in 1908]. I took that contradiction and thought, 'What a great film that would make.'"

Gugliotta shared Fasano's belief, so the task of writing a new chapter for the outlaws began.

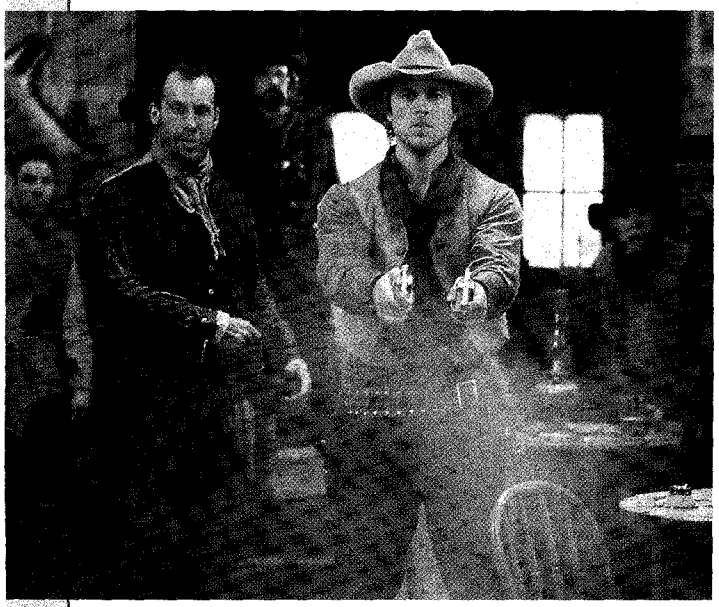
"The appeal of Butch and Sundance," Fasano added, "is the endless supply of legends about the pair. Their trail apparently stretches from Canada down to Bolivia, with various stops in between either for thievery or honest work."

The film is based on the historical accounts of the famous duo, and it opens with the creation of the Hole-in-the-Wall Gang, Butch and Sundance's robberies and their apparent deaths. Fasano then builds on the premise that the pair lived until the 1930s, and that they were the last of the old-time outlaws.

"Sundance, I depict as a true man of the Old West," Fasano continued, "and Butch as the progressive thinker. This difference opens the door to many potential conflicts, and at the same time, allows the depth of their friendship to shine through. I also added Etta [Ethel] Place as a main character into the mix, completing the romantic triangle. I wanted to steer clear of the 'Remake' tag. This is not a remake of the 1969 film. This film focuses on the early days of the duo, their meeting and subsequent friendship and their [mis]adventures throughout the film.

"As a production team, Greg, myself, the actors, and [Director] Sergio Gezzan strove for historical accuracy. As much as possible, we incorporated elements of 'real' history into the film. Serious Western film buffs will not have seen a film like this on TV before. After having done *Tombstone*, all I can say is that *The Legend of Butch and Sundance* is going to be as good, if not better," Fasano concluded.

"The challenge of *Legend* for me," said David Rogers, who



***(Far Left) The Sundance Kid (Ryan Browning, firing) settles a dispute his way, after another Hole-in-the-Wall Gang member infuriates him.***

– By Kimberly French/NBC –

***(Left) "The Legend of Butch and Sundance will always be a highlight of my acting career." —Rachelle Lefevre, who plays Etta Place.***

– By Justin Lubin/NBC –



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*"I want people to look at my performance and think 'Wow, these guys could be real,' and not pass us off as drugstore cowboys. I am anxiously awaiting the chance to put on the holster one more time."*
*—David Rogers, who plays Butch Cassidy*

– By Justin Lubin/NBC –

plays Butch Cassidy, "was to convey the spirit of Butch and Sundance while preserving as much of the history as possible. We practiced gun handling with 100-year-old guns, we used turn-of-the-century saddle gear, and we, for all purposes, we lived in the late 1890s. I was five years old when I last played cowboy this seriously."

"It's funny," Ryan Browning said, "six months before I got the role as Sundance, I told a friend that it was time the story of Butch and Sundance was told again. And boom, here I am, telling the story. I felt real comfortable as Sundance. There is more of Sundance in me than I care to admit sometimes. Not much [is] known about this time period, and I enjoyed exploring the end of the frontier era with John, and the rest of my costars. The whole experience was amazing and I think the finished product will blow people away."

One of the strong points in *The Legend of Butch and Sundance* is the relationship between Butch, Sundance and Etta. Rachelle Lefevre portrays Etta Place as a strong, independent young lady. "She had to be, to be constantly on the run, and yet stay with two outlaws. David, Ryan and I had fun on and off the set. We really became Butch, Etta and Sundance," Lefevre told *True West*.

Greg Gugliotta is optimistic about the performance of the movie. "Should the movie go to series, the concept would include 'kisses with history.' Butch, Sundance and Etta will be on the run from someone or another, and as a result, will have to keep their identities hidden. Along the way, they will be able to encounter famous Americans from the turn of the century such as Teddy Roosevelt, the Rough Riders and even the Wright Brothers."

He adds, "It's time for a good, sexy Western. I, along with John and the rest of the production crew, and hopefully the network, believe that audiences are ready for a good Western series. There is some romance, some history, and enough action in *The Legend of Butch & Sundance* to keep everyone's interest."

One word from NBC, and these folks are ready to strap on holsters, saddle up the horses and 'play cowboy' for many years to come.

**Tim Lasiuta** is a Western Canadian freelance writer with interests in comic books, movies and Western memorabilia.

## WESTERNS IN THE WORKS

*Tom Berenger (left) stars as the old-school sheriff who is often at odds with Peter O'Meara's character in the USA series* Peacemakers.

– By Shane Harvey/USA Network –

Marshal Jared Stone, an old-school lawman who thinks the fastest gun prevents crime, and Larimer Finch, an advocate of forensic science, will duke out their differences in the USA Network series, *Peacemakers*. Originally scheduled for a fall release, the series premiered on July 30. **Tom Berenger** plays a middle-aged marshal, who teams up with Yale graduate and ex-deputy from Chicago Larimer Finch, played by **Peter O'Meara. Amy Carlson** *(Third Watch)* plays a medical student who returns home to help run her family's undertaking business and ends up working with the sheriff. The series is set in Colorado in 1882, when fingerprinting and photography were early forensic tools.

**Madeline Stowe** *(Bad Girls)* has turned down Fox's offer of $5 million for her Western spec script, *The Unbound Captives*. (It's one of the highest offers for a spec script ever, according to *Variety*.) Fox saw **Russell Crowe** as perfect for the leading character, yet did not see Stowe as the costar, which is why she rejected their offer. Stowe is committed to star in the film about a 19th-century mother, who garners help from a frontiersman to rescue her two children, who were taken captive by Comanches after the murder of their father.

The Las Vegas Wranglers professional hockey team had a surprise guest speaker when **Rick Schroder** *(NYPD Blue)* introduced **Glen Gulutzan,** the new general manager and head coach of the Wranglers. Schroder was in the middle of filming *Black Cloud* at the Orleans Arena when he was asked to fill in for team owner **Charles Davenport.** After the press conference, Schroder resumed shooting. A Native American *Rocky* is the best way to describe *Black Cloud*, which stars **Eddie Spears** as a boxer coming to terms with his Indian heritage while fighting for a spot on the U.S. Olympic boxing team. **Tim McGraw** makes his big-screen acting debut in the film and will be featured on the soundtrack. The indie film is funded by Native American tribes in California, Oklahoma and Minnesota.

Westerns Channel on Encore looks at the Western during the turbulent '60s and '70s in October. The offering of anti-heroic films includes *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*, *Goin' South* and *The Professionals*.



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BY MEGHAN SAAR

# Illustrator Brings the Old West Alive

*Al Martin Napoletano stands tall.*

*Al Martin Napoletano.*

– ALL IMAGES COURTESY AL MARTIN NAPOLETANO –

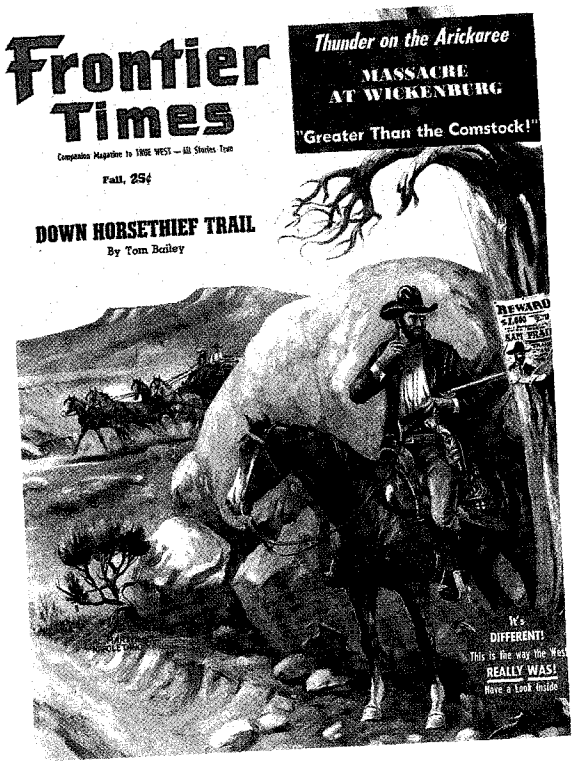
Not many Western illustrators could render a story dead-on like Al Martin Napoletano (or Nap, as he is affectionately called). His artwork colors readers' visions of stories, such as the vigilantes' capture of gang leader Lucky Bill Thorrington in "Lucky Bill Gets the Noose," the first story Nap illustrated for *True West* in 1954.

Every year since, Nap's artwork has brought to life many *True West* stories. Nap's illustrations have also appeared in *Frontier Times, Gold!, Horse Tales, Badmen, Wanderlust, Relics* and *Old West*—other Western magazines produced by *True West* founder Joe Austell Small. Nap's depictions of rodeo life also graced many colorful posters and programs at rodeos in Salinas, Calapooia and Red Bluff, California.

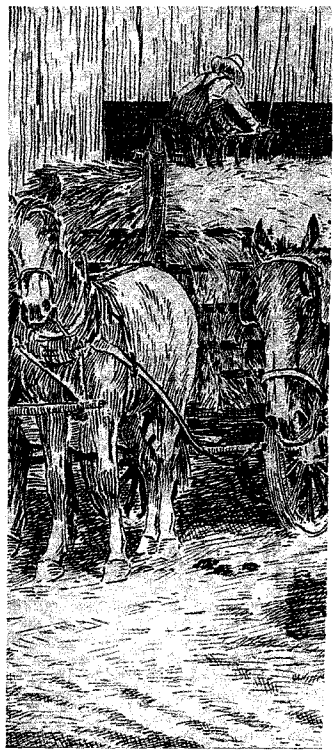
Nap's vision of the Western stories he illustrates is never diluted by the various mediums—opaque, ink-wash, pen and ink, scratchboard or oil—that he uses to interpret events authentically.

"No assignment baffles [Nap] whether it concerns the American West, the Sahara, a sinking ship, a racing horse, flintlocks or sixguns, an old prospector's cabin or a New England barn auction," wrote Small, in his introduction to Nap's book, *The Western Illustrations of Al Martin Napoletano.*

Starting with Nap's first comic strip "The Ranch Boys" in the 1943 *Western Horseman*, many publications, including *True West*, have been thankful 83-year-old Nap is still painting the West for readers everywhere.




*In September 1958, Nap mailed six cover ideas to Joe Small. On November 7, 1958, Small made suggestions for the final cover, saying "If you get this all done up right and in four beautiful colors, we'll schedule her real soon and I think we'll have a knock-out cover." At left is Nap's first cover art for Small's Western Publications, which appeared in the Fall 1959* Frontier Times.



*Nap does recall one assignment he "really goofed on." In the Fall 1979* Old West *illustration he did for "Old Herb Steele," Nap says he "should have read the story one more time before I started to ink." His original drawing (right, inset) had three cowboys on three horses, yet there was supposed to be only one cowboy on a horse. When the other two cowboys and horses were edited out of the drawing (right), the horse on the far right ended up with five legs.*

*Visit www.barbwiremuseum.com and www.shumway@pegasusartgallery.com to view Al Martin Napoletano's artwork.*



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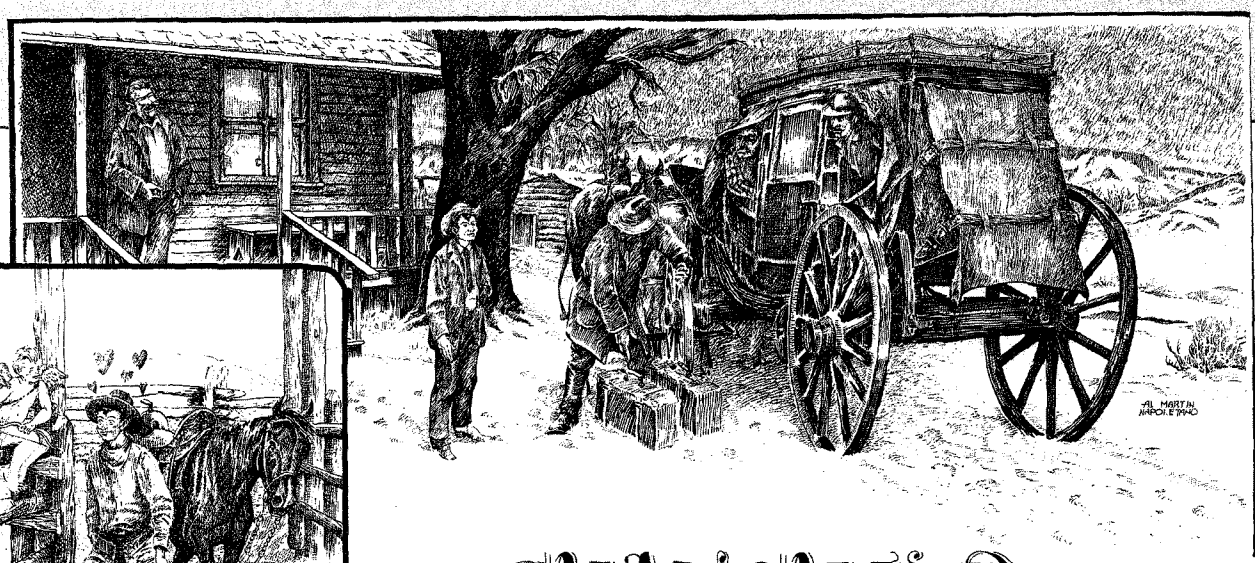
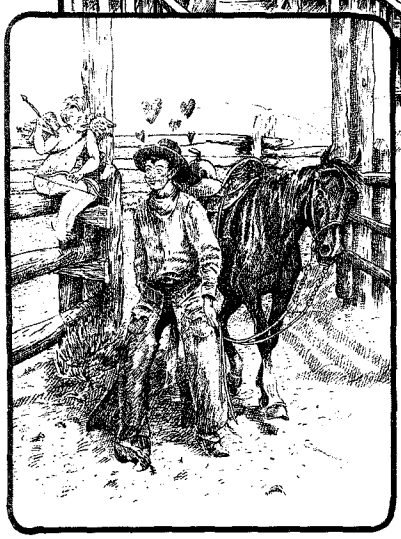


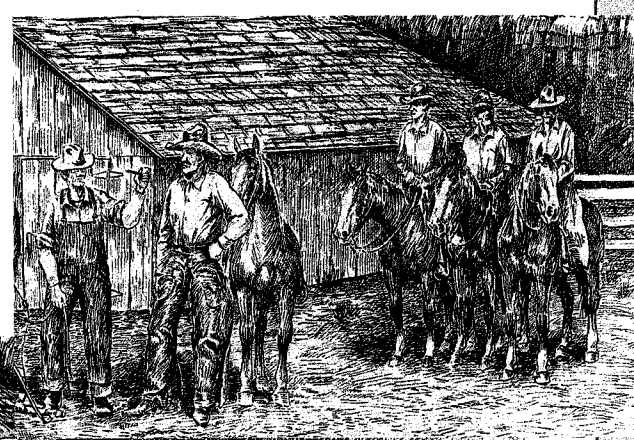



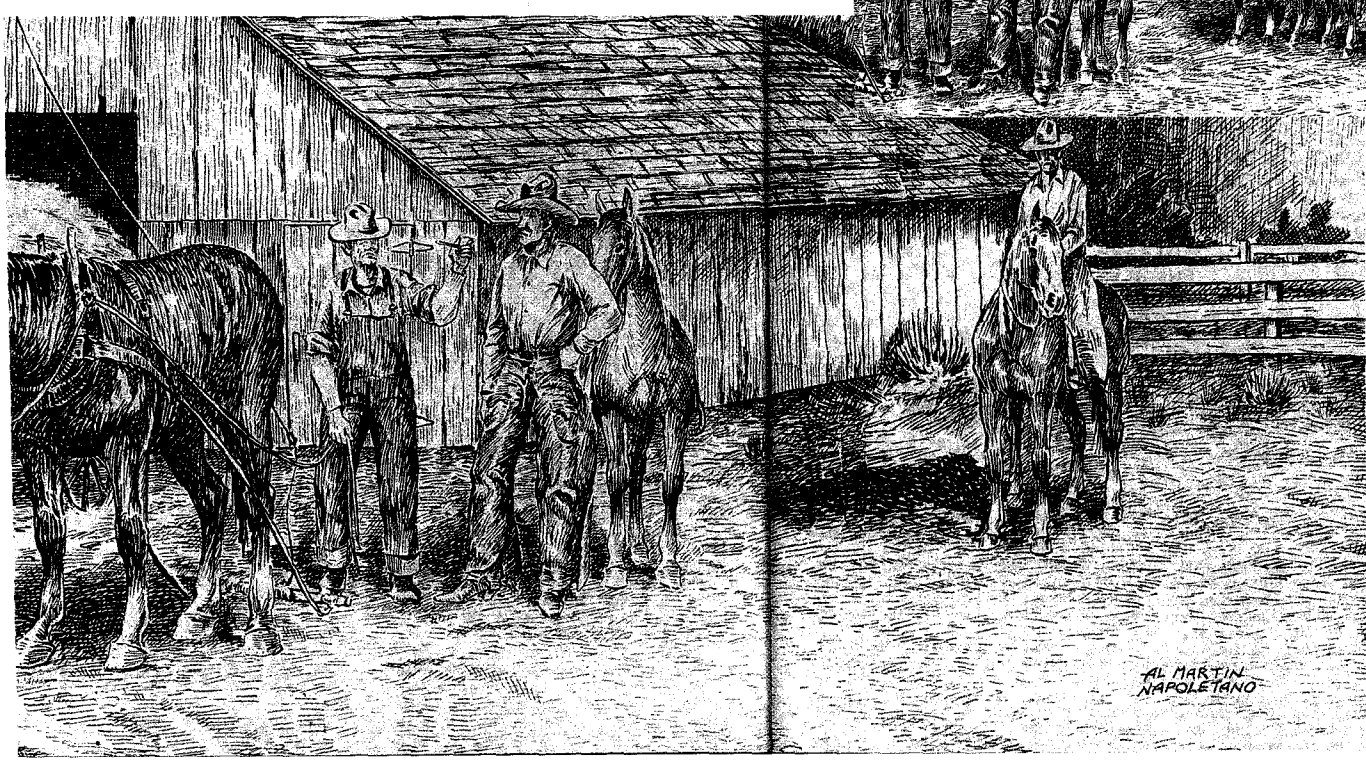
# SHANGHIED

by

**Walt Coburn**

*(Above) The late Walt Coburn first requested Napoletano as the illustrator for his stories in a letter he wrote to Joe Small, explaining he was unable to locate photos for his article: "June 12, 1970—I'm enclosing the Billy Jacobs story which I hope you will like . . . I never met Al Napoletano but know he has illustrated many of my stories and is a good Western artist." Through the years, Napoletano has illustrated numerous Coburn stories, including "Shanghied," published in* Old West's *Summer 1973 issue.*





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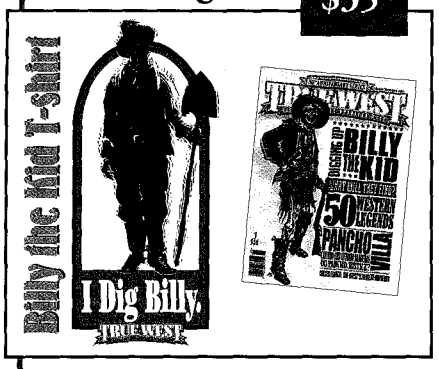


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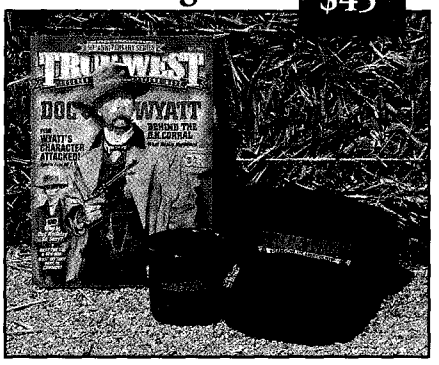

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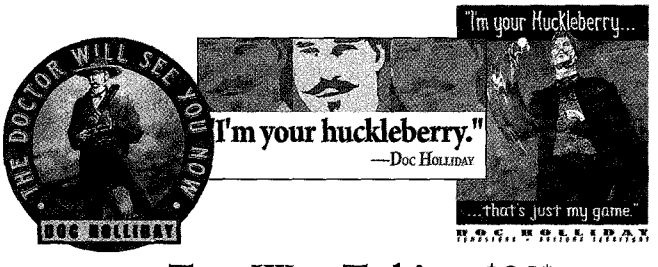


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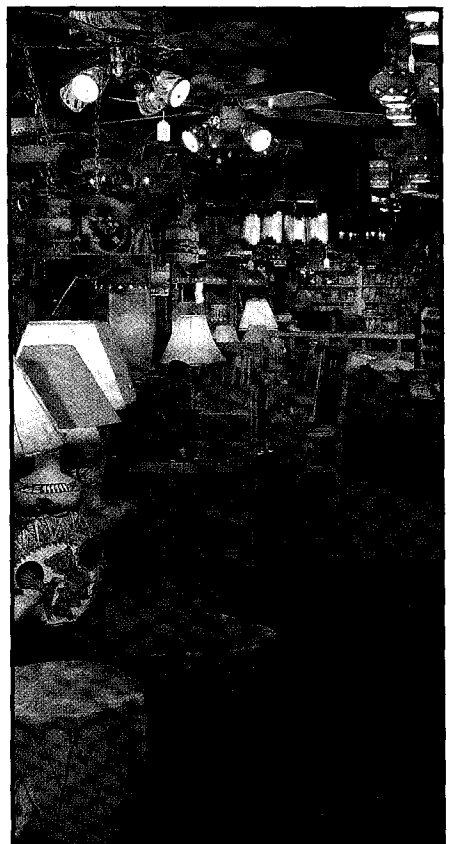

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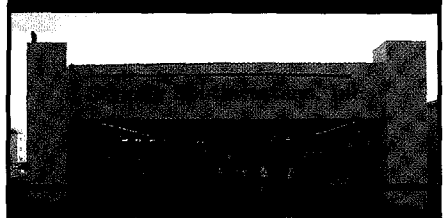

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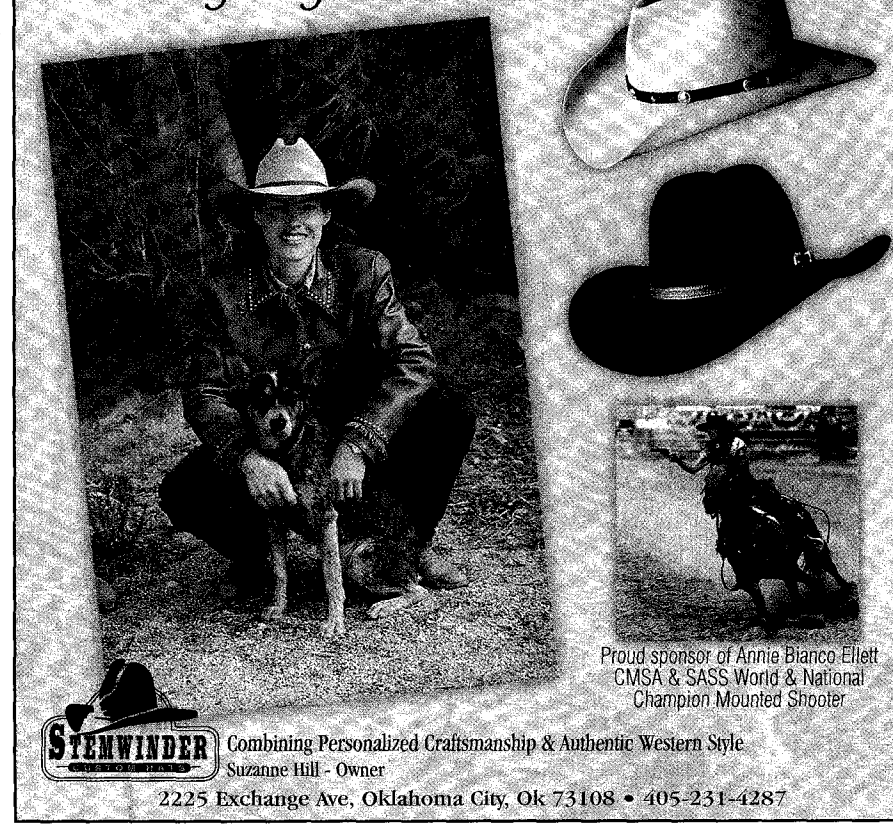

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BY CORINNE BROWN

# Following the Herd

*It's a guy thing.*

Nothing's more amusing to an old cowgirl than a line dance, especially at an Elk's Lodge at rodeo time. There I was, holding up the bar with the best of 'em, eyeing a roomful of cowpokes. Most were hell-bent on catching a girl long enough to grab a slow dance, milling around like a wild herd if I ever saw one.

What I noticed then was how much the same all the men looked. Boots, jeans, a belt with a big buckle and a hat—usually black and checked at the door—which is apparently the uniform of success, whether you're a weekend cowboy or the real deal. Aside from the obvious benefit—success by association—it seemed to me that every man there stood the same chance, more or less. Once up close, age and gut-size inevitably made the cut.

Study old photos from the early days and most cowboys look different from today. Back then, they wore wool pants inside the boot, full leather chaps or shaggy woolies, vests, neckerchiefs and banded collar shirts. But the point is, they all looked the same then too! Safety in numbers. But, with good herd management, they have evolved to new strength. Truth is, it took almost a hundred years, the silver screen and the Wrangler NFR to develop the work-wear chic that seems to be the cowboy look of today.

Now, less is more. Most cool dudes wouldn't be caught dead in loud patterns these days, or worse, those Aztec prints of a few years back. Solid colors or vintage shirts worn out, over a T-shirt, is what's in now. It's L.A. rocker style—as if no one can tell if you're getting dressed or undressed.

"I can tell by your outfit" is the rule. So? All I know is there isn't a man alive who doesn't look taller, leaner and sexier in a good fitting pair of jeans than in anything else money can buy. Add a nice boot and the mysterious shadow of a well-made hat, and there's one heck of a look you can call "dressed for success."

Don't ask me, or a million other women why, it just works, whether you ride broncs for a living or not.

***For the cowboy in you, wear the jeans that work on a horse, or off, and never go out of style—Wrangler's classic indigo denim 13MWZ, designed and cut for the real deal, or men who just look like they are.***

– COURTESY WRANGLER –

**What's Out!**

***Bye, bye loud prints.***

***Corinne***



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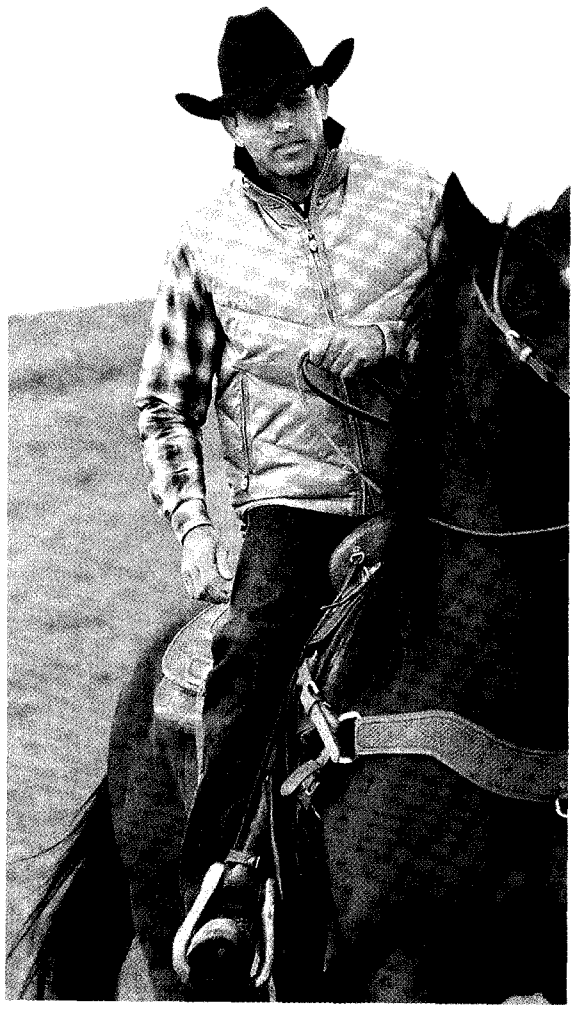

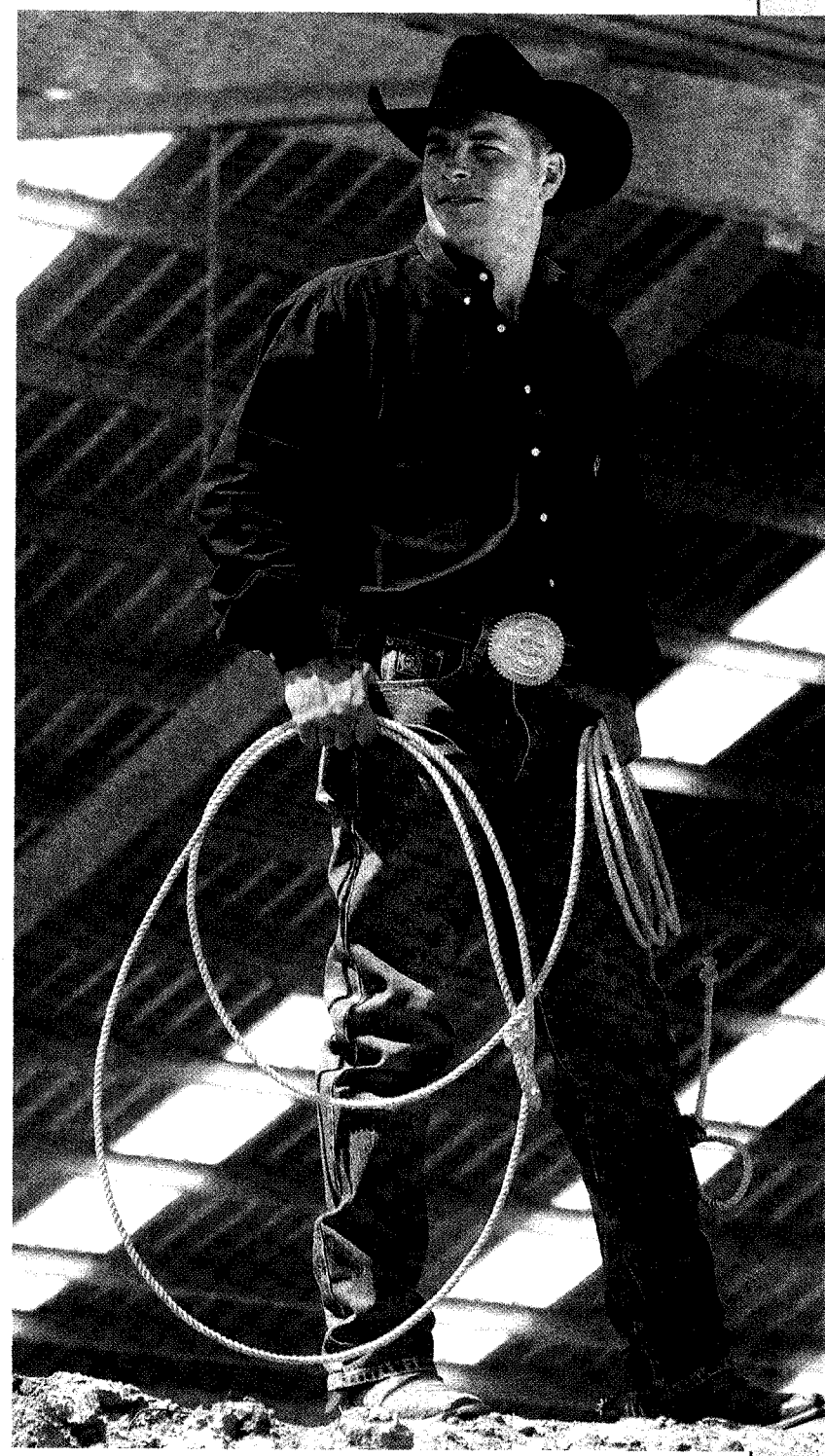

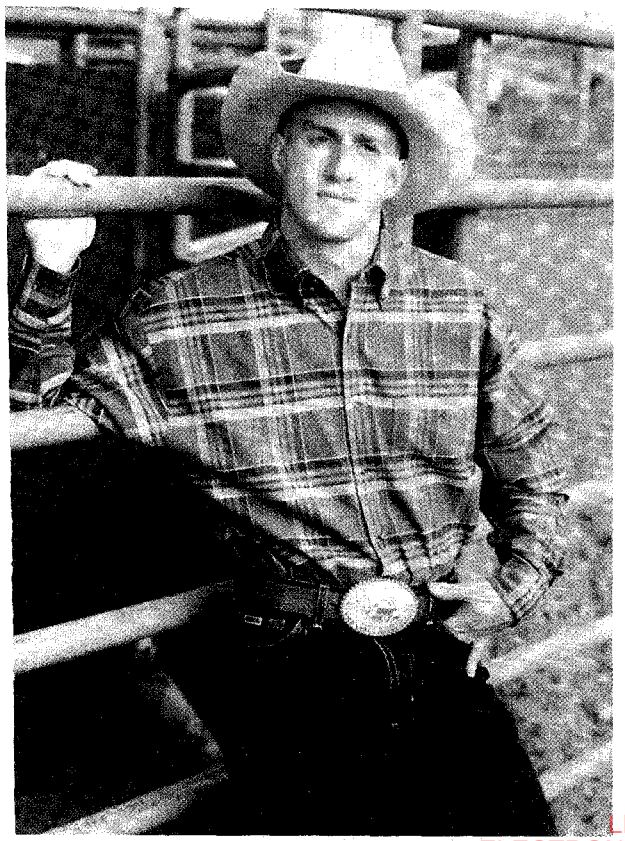

***(Top Left) To stay warm in the fall, wear Roper's jean-friendly, ombre, herringbone plaid shirt topped by a V-channeled down vest.***

– Courtesy Roper Apparel –

***(Top Right) Cody Ohl, NFR 2001 calf roping and all-around champion, wears Rocky Mountain Clothing Co.'s new black label Cinch jeans.***

– Courtesy Rocky Mountain Clothing Co. –

***(Bottom Left) PRCA rough stock cowboy Junior Ray wears an olive cotton shirt in large window-pane plaid, tucked into Classic Fit indigo jeans by Resistol Rodeo Gear. His hat by Resistol and belt buckle by Agri-Buckle of Kissimee, Florida, complete his winning look.***

– By Gary Sohrweid –

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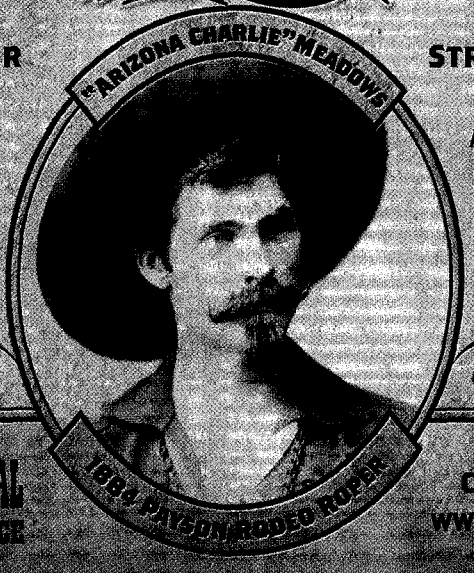


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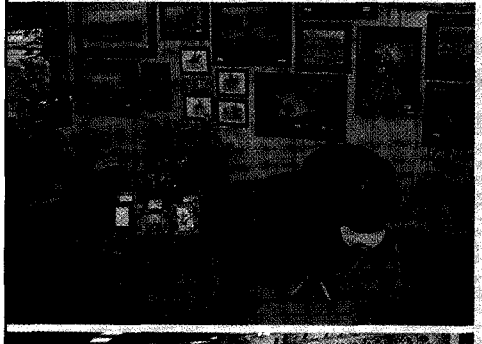

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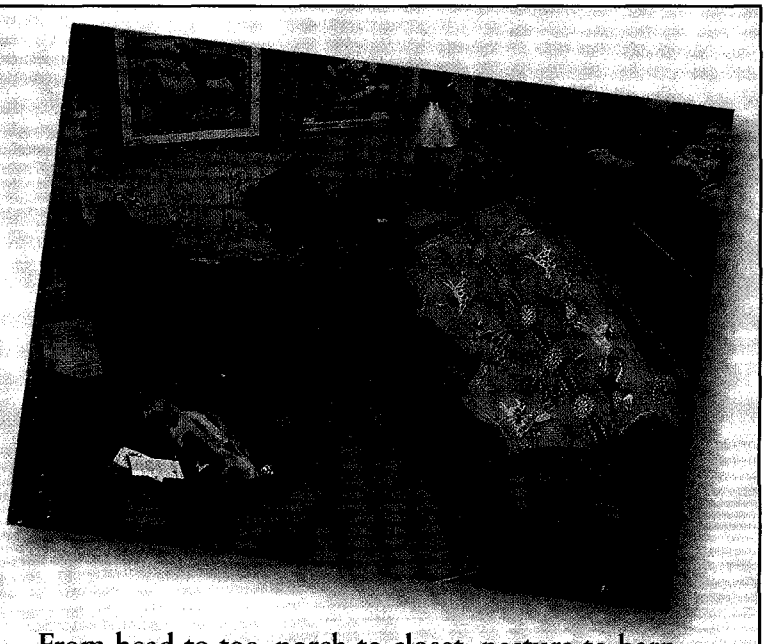

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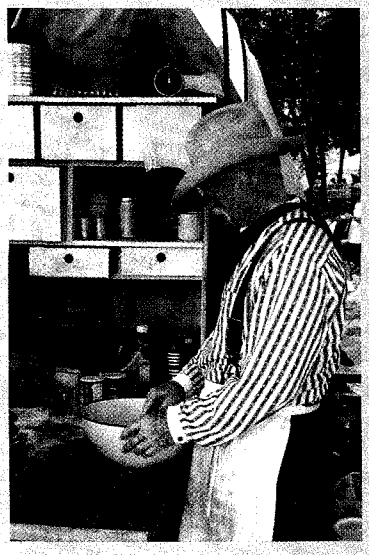

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BY JANA BOMMERSBACH

# National Cowgirl Museum & Hall of Fame

*The cowgirl spirit is alive and kicking in Fort Worth.*

It doesn't get much better than this: watching fancy marksmanship by Annie Oakley on film that was shot by Thomas Edison. Right off, you know you're somewhere that cares.

You're at the National Cowgirl Museum and Hall of Fame in Fort Worth, Texas, celebrating the "cowgirl spirit" in one of the nation's newest and most interactive museums. Almost every exhibit is designed to engage the viewer, from the rolling clothesline of fancy rodeo duds, to the touching testimonials of life on the ranch, to the talking horse—yes, the talking horse—that comments on women in the movies.

You can watch the best of the rodeo trick riders from the early 20th century—including a nifty film clip of Vera McGinnis showing off on horseback—or select your favorite country tune from a "jukebox" display or dial the '50s Western TV shows you liked best or learn about the life stories of more than 160 women honored in the Hall of Fame.

This prestigious sisterhood includes Annie Oakley, Patsy Cline, Dale Evans, Laura Ingalls Wilder, Sacagawea, potter Maria Martinez and Sandra Day O'Connor. This November, the new inductees will include New Mexico sculptor Glenna Goodacre, Montana and North Dakota rancher Ann Seacrest, California horse trainer Shelia Varian and the late Velda Tindall Smith, a rodeo cowgirl from the Golden Age.

The museum was organized in 1975 by the late Margaret Formby in the basement of a library in her hometown of Hereford, Texas. When it became obvious the museum needed a larger venue, 35 cities in six states wanted it. The board chose Fort Worth, where the leading women of the town raised $21 million in private funds to build the 33,000 square-foot museum, giving it the most up-to-date displays. It opened in 2002 and quickly became a favorite destination in the city's Western Heritage Center.

While the museum celebrates the courage and determination of women—often "ordinary women" who distinguished themselves doing "extraordinary things that needed to get done"—it also honors the wisdom and humor of women.

"You can't trust a man cause a man will lie, but a gun stays beside you till the day you die," go the lyrics of a Western song, and the museum directors found it such a fitting sentence, they put it on the wall. They also quote the "cowgirl spirit: I can do anything."

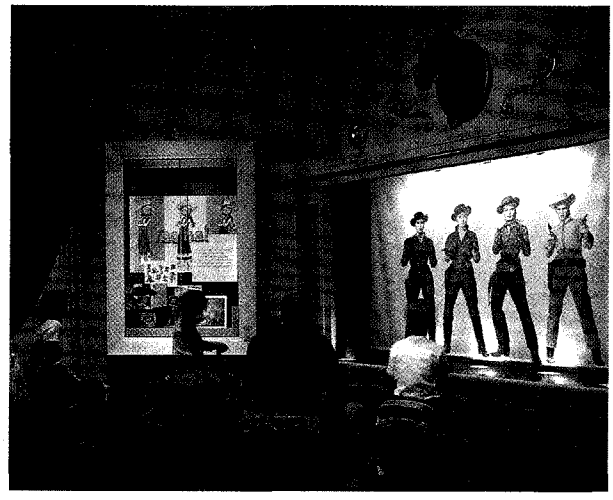
Besides the permanent exhibits, the museum offers a full program of lectures, special displays and shows throughout the year, so there's always something new.

And if you visit the women's bathroom, you'll find a hand-lettered sign that probably says it all: "Cowgirls are forever."

*Visit www.cowgirl.net or call 1-800-476-FAME for more information.*

***The horse above the screen has a lot to say about cowgirls in the movies.***

– COURTESY NATIONAL COWGIRL MUSEUM & HALL OF FAME –



*"If a man watches three football games in a row, he should be declared legally dead."*

**- Erma Bombeck**



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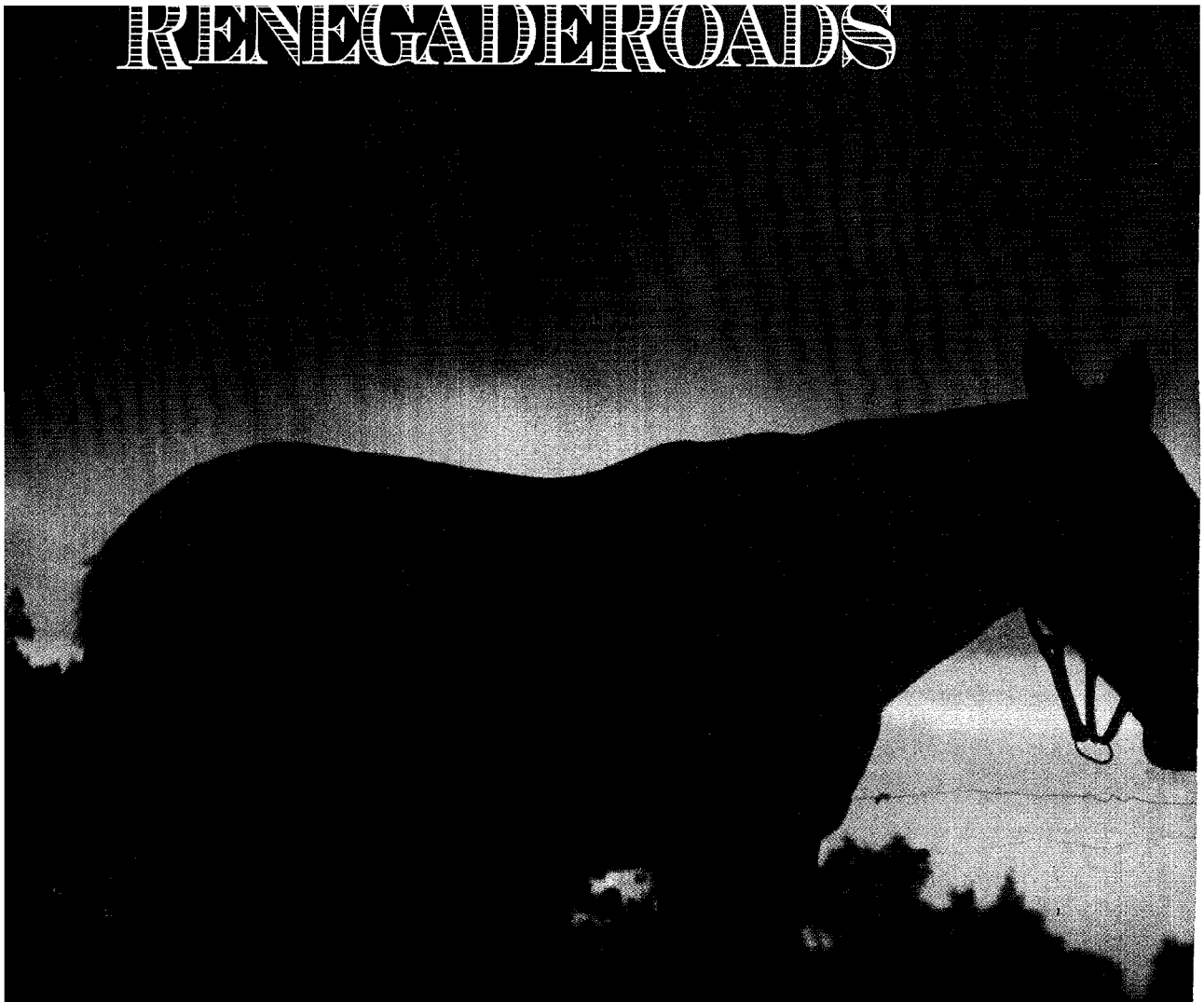
# RENEGADE ROADS



BY CANDY MOULTON

## Following Cherokee Tracks

*From Bent's "Old" Fort to Fort Bridger.*

he Cherokee Trail when I was a little girl. of it crossed my family's ranch near Wyoming, and when we were at the

because it was forged by members of that tribe in 1849. It's not the far better known Cherokee Trail of Tears, over which the Cherokees, Choctaws, Chickasaws

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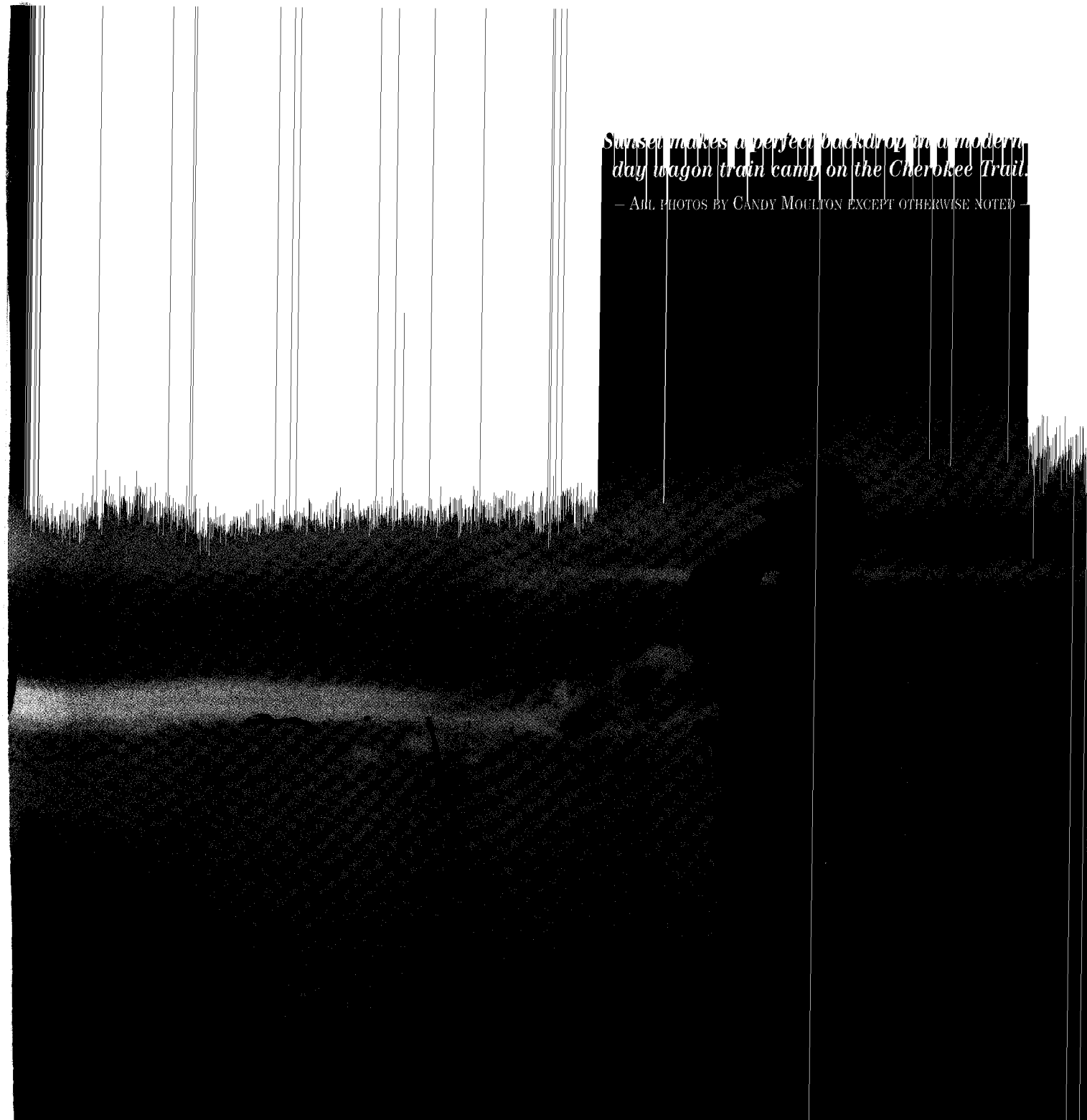

*Sunset makes a perfect backdrop in a modern-day wagon train camp on the Cherokee Trail.*

– All photos by Candy Moulton except otherwise noted –

apart. The first major long-distance cattle drives in the West used this trail to supply beef from Arkansas and Oklahoma to gold camps in California.

The trail starts near La Junta, Colorado, at Bent's "Old" Fort NHS. Most parties made their way to Bent's "Old" Fort by following the Santa Fe Trail or other feeder routes from Arkansas and Oklahoma. By the time they reached Bent, St. Vrain & Company's trading post on the Arkansas River, most travelers were trail savvy, and likely trail weary. From Bent's "Old" Fort, they followed the Arkansas River Valley west toward Pueblo, Colorado, before turning north on an established trail made by trappers and traders going between Taos, New Mexico, and Wyoming's Fort Laramie.

The earliest settlers in Pueblo established the El Pueblo Trading Post to serve travelers and other residents. Near downtown Pueblo today, the trading post has been recreated by the Colorado Historical Society.

From Pueblo, follow the trail north on Interstate 25 through Colorado Springs, Castle Rock and Denver.

A lot of traffic traveled through this region during the trail's first decade of use. Some Cherokees who forged the trail to California's goldfields also made the initial strikes that eventually led to the Pikes Peak gold rush. In addition to gold seekers *en route to California*, several military commands also followed the trail. Capt. Randolph B. Marcy used it as a return route after he had journeyed through Colorado's mountains from Fort Bridger to Fort Union in the winter of 1857-58. (See July 2003, *Renegade Roads*.)



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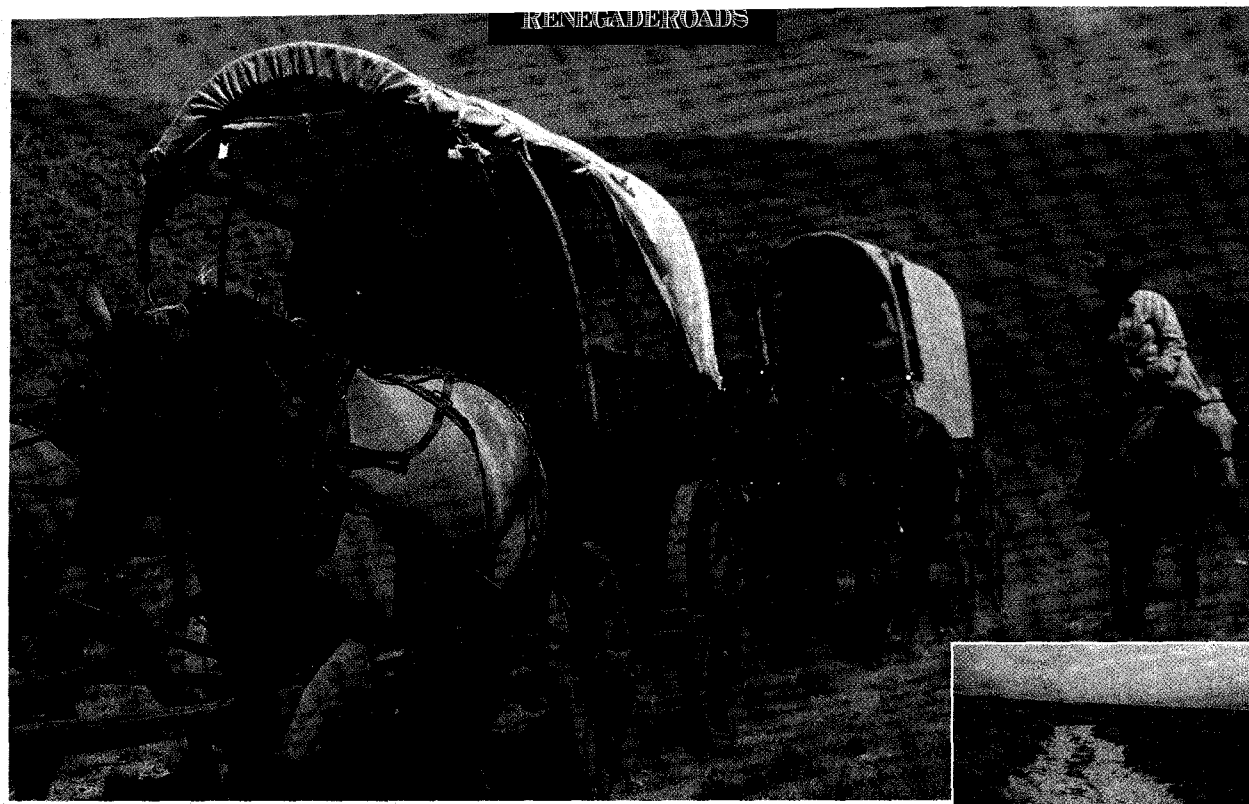

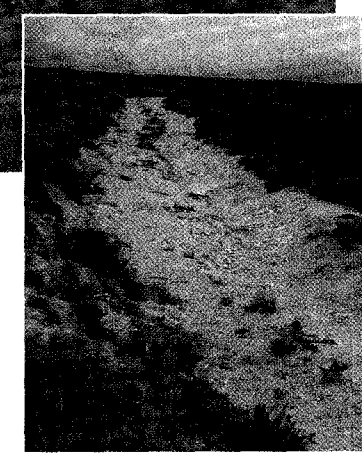

*(Above) Modern-day wagonmaster Ben Kern leads wagons along a section of the Cherokee Trail. The wagons are traversing the trail from Fort Bridger to the Green River, west of the city of Green River, Wyoming. (Right) Used by wagon trains to drive cattle from Arkansas and Oklahoma to California, the Cherokee Trail has several branches across Southern Wyoming, including this track through Carbon County.*

SIDE ROAD

## Must See Places Along the Route

**Bent's "Old" Fort National Historic Site,** near La Junta, Colorado: Important for its role in the Santa Fe trade as the center of the Bent, St. Vrain & Co.'s trading empire, the fort was built by William Bent in 1833-34 and blown up by him in 1849. Reconstruction of a replica was completed in 1976, using 1830s journals and drawings, such as an 1846 sketch by Lt. James Albert. **Information:** www.nps.gov/beol/index.htm; 719-383-5010.

**Fort Vasquez Museum,** Platteville, Colorado: This recreated fort has displays on the strategic importance of fur trading posts along the South Platte River, of which Fort Vasquez (1835-42) was the first of four rival trading posts built within a few miles of each other. **Information:** 970-785-2832.

**Grand Encampment Museum,** Encampment, Wyoming: Opened in 1966, this museum preserves 14 of the area's original structures, including the 1872 Lake Creek Stage Station. **Information:** encampment.1wyo.net/GEMuseum.html; 307-327-5308 or 307-327-5558.

**Little Snake River Museum,** Savery, Wyoming: Wyoming State Highway 70 between Encampment and Baggs passes by this museum, which features mountain man Jim Baker's stockade cabin, built in 1873. The cabin originally had three stories and was located at the confluence of Little Snake River and Savery Creek. **Information:** lsrvmuseum.homestead.com/homepage.html; 307-383-7262.

**Point of Rocks Stage Station,** Point of Rocks, Wyoming (Off Interstate 80): From 1862-68, this stage station served the Overland Stage and Wells, Fargo & Co. The stage station went out of business after the transcontinental railroad reached Point of Rocks in 1868. The station became a home to many, including Hole-in-the-Wall Gang member Jim McKee.

**Expedition Island,** Green River, Wyoming: Less than a mile from Interstate 80 is the starting point of John Wesley Powell's 1869 exploration down the Green River and into the Grand Canyon. **Information:** 307-875-5711.

**Fort Bridger State Historic Site,** Fort Bridger, Wyoming: The fort was first established by Jim Bridger and Louis Vasquez in 1843. It was taken over by the Mormons in the early 1850s and became a military camp from 1858 until the 1890s. The site has an 1888 stone barracks displaying historical artifacts, a cobble rock wall built by the Mormons and a replica of Jim Bridger's trading post. **Information:** wyoparks.state.wy.us/bridger1.htm; 307-782-3842.

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In what is now a part of the Denver metropolitan area, the trail splits. One route heads along the South Platte River to Greeley and a site known as Cherokee Crossing or Cherokee City. From there, the trail makes its way along the Cache La Poudre to Laporte. If you take this route (follow U.S. 85 from Denver north to Greeley), visit some of Colorado's early trading sites, such as Fort Lupton, Fort Jackson, Fort Vasquez and Fort St. Vrain.

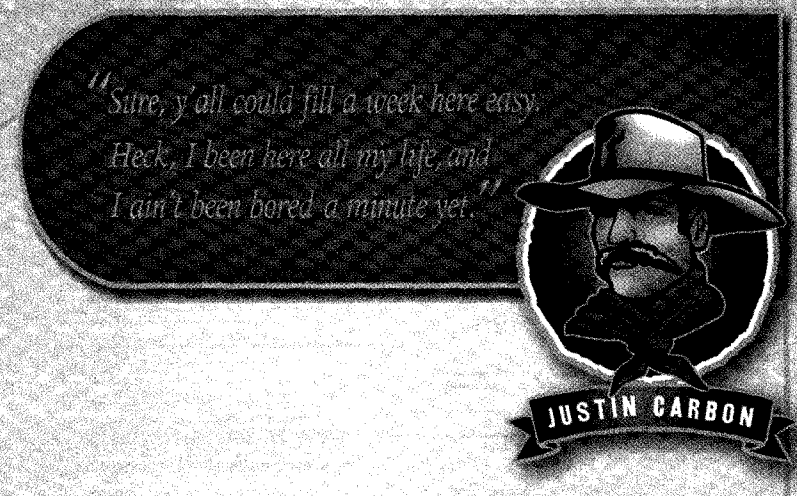
Today, U.S. 85 literally surrounds Fort Vasquez, which the Colorado Historical Society recreated just feet from its original location. At the fort and museum, you'll learn about other fur trading posts in the vicinity, and see equipment and clothing used by mountain men.

Most Cherokee Trail travelers used the branch that crossed the South Platte River east of Greeley at Cherokee Crossing/Cherokee City. Other emigrants followed a path closer to the Front Range of the Rockies. The two trails eventually merged in present-day Laporte.

Once emigrants made their way into Wyoming, north of Virginia Dale (better known as an Overland Trail station), the main trail continued north along U.S. 287 to Laramie and Interstate 80 from Laramie to Fort Bridger, passing through or near Elk Mountain, Rawlins, Rock Springs, Green River and the town of Fort Bridger.

Laramie didn't exist during Cherokee Trail days, but came to life in 1869 when the Union Pacific Railroad pushed west. By all accounts, the towns spawned by the transcontinental railroad were hell-on-wheels, as most communities flourished quickly and lasted briefly. Because of the city of Laramie's strategic location, it became permanent.

Traveling west from Laramie on I-80, you'll skirt around the northern edge of the Medicine Bow Mountains. Unlike the original Cherokee Trail travelers, you'll find restaurants and lodgings, such as the historic Elk Mountain Hotel in the small community of the same name.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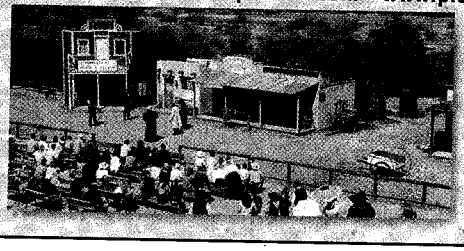


SIDEROAD

## Good Eats and Sleeps

**The Fort Restaurant** in Morrison, Colorado (U.S. 285 and Rte. 8), is a replica of Bent's Old Fort. Order buffalo, Rocky Mountain oysters or other "period" foods.

**Hotel Wolf** in Saratoga, Wyoming, serves the best prime rib along Southern Wyoming's portion of the Cherokee Trail.

**Spirit West River Lodge** in Riverside, Wyoming, is located beside the Encampment River, just south of where the trail crossed.

In Rawlins, the north branch passed east and north of the city and the south branch was much farther south. As you continue west, detour from I-80 at Point of Rocks and drive about a half mile south of the interstate to the Point of Rocks Stage Station. The old stone station is the easiest access point to walk the Cherokee Trail, as the route is well marked.

The 1849 trail route passed north of Rock Springs, another town spawned by the Union Pacific, but one 1850 party went directly through what is now the town of Green River. From Green River, continue west to Fort Bridger, where you should plan to spend several hours exploring. This trading post has served travelers on the Oregon, Mormon and Cherokee Trails since 1843 when Jim Bridger and Louis Vasquez officially opened it. (Vasquez is the same man for whom Colorado's Fort Vasquez is named.) You can buy period goods ranging from trade beads, hats and shirts to tin cups and replica weapons at the recreated trading post.

In 1850, some travelers took a new route that zigged and zagged along the Wyoming-Colorado border. To follow this route, take Wyoming Highway 230 west from Laramie toward Woods Landing. After reaching Mountain Home, you'll break out of the Medicine Bow



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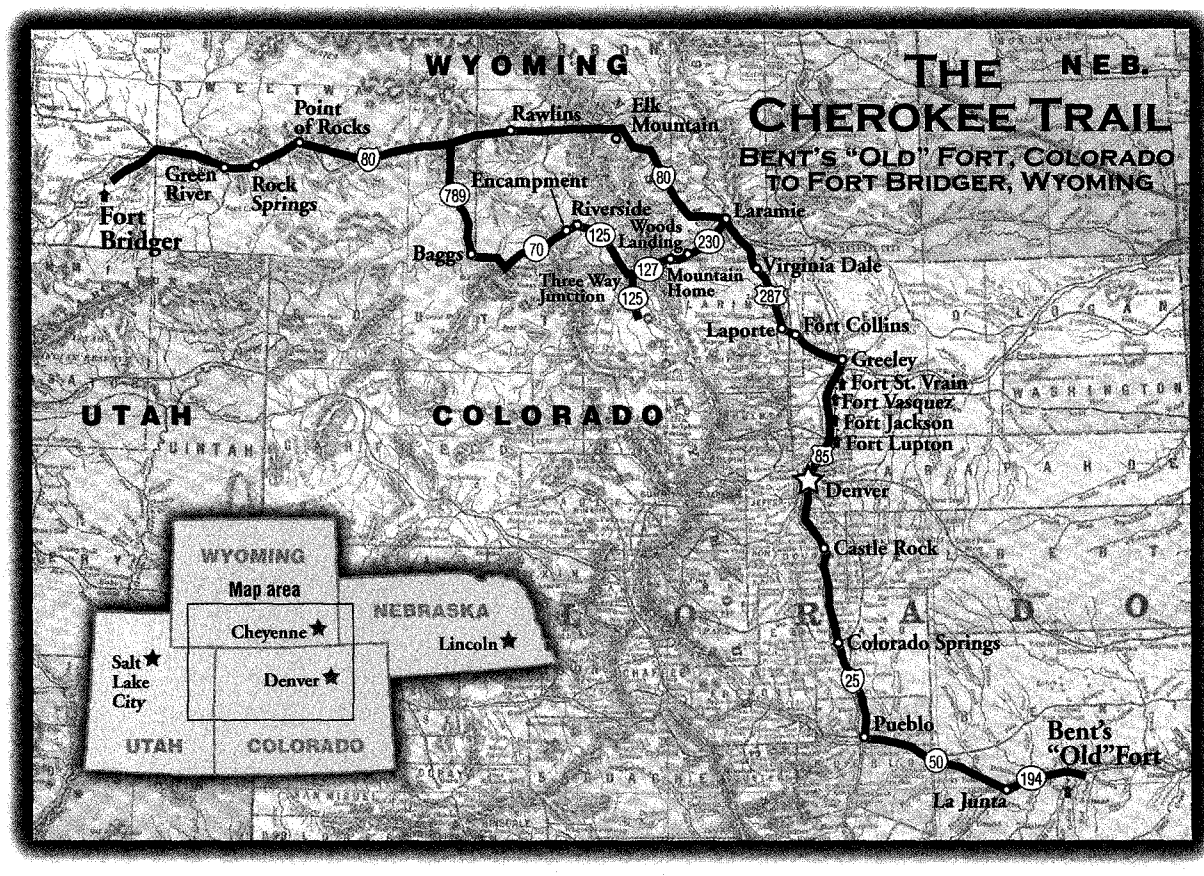
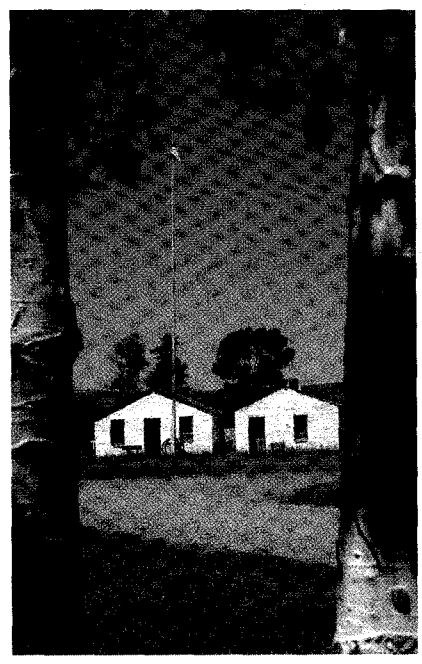



National Forest and be in Colorado's open park—Kings Canyon. You'll see the grade of the old railroad, which is roughly where the Cherokee Trail made its way into North Park.

At the junction of Colorado Highways 125 and 127, turn north toward Saratoga, Wyoming. Riverside is just 45 miles up the road, followed by Encampment. After crossing the North Platte River, follow the 1850 Cherokee Trail's south branch to Encampment. Southwest of the highway, the trail runs on a line close to the mountains. This is the part of the Cherokee Trail that passes near my home. Although the trail isn't marked, you'll cross it near Riverside.

Much of the trail between Encampment and Baggs is on private property and inaccessible, though there are unpaved county roads to drive on so you can stay as close as possible to the original route. For help following the trail to Baggs, stop at the Grand Encampment Museum, which sells county maps. You can also reach Baggs by following Wyoming Highway 70, which is south of the trail.



*Fort Bridger's old bakery and guardhouse. In 1925, a fire ravaged the fort and the old bakery's roof, windows and woodwork were destroyed. Only its lime concrete walls remained once the fire was put out.*

– Courtesy Wyoming Tourism –

North of Baggs, the Cherokee Trail crosses Highway 789 and continues west on a route that runs just a few miles north of the Wyoming-Colorado border. This is big, rough country with lots of roads, many of them two-track trails. The best way to see the south branch of the Cherokee Trail, west of Baggs, is to do what I did and contact John and Esther Clark of Wild Horse Country Tours. They'll show you not only Cherokee Trail segments—including graves of travelers who didn't make the entire journey—but also wild horses that roam free across this section of public land.

If you have a four-wheel-drive vehicle and an adventurous spirit, you can also find the trail south of Rock Springs and Green River. For maps and directions, contact the Bureau of Land Management office in Rock Springs.

**Candy Moulton** lives and writes near Encampment, Wyoming.



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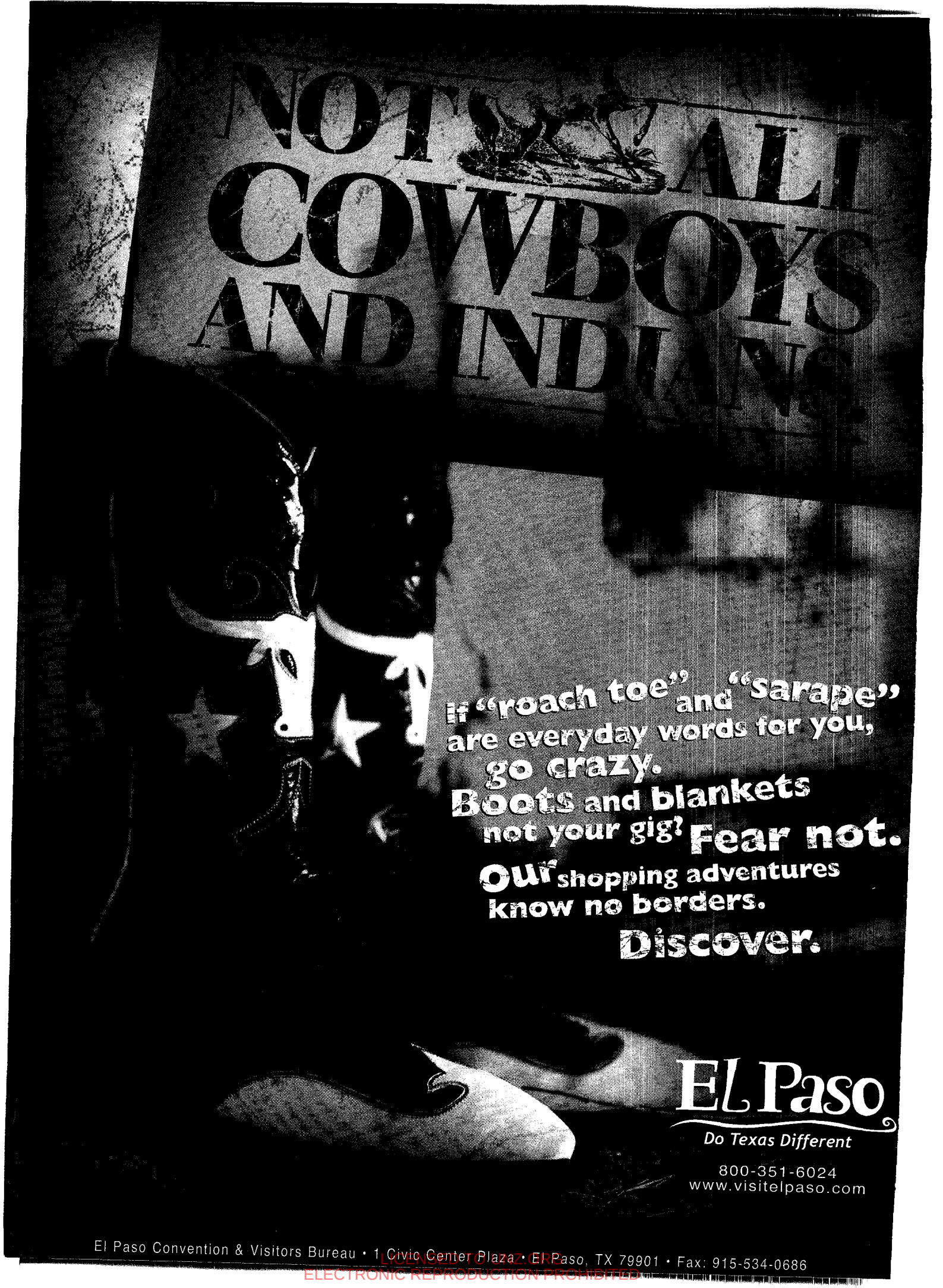
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BY JOANN ROE

# Beating Out the Pilgrims

*A day trip to El Paso, Texas, home of the first Thanksgiving.*

"El Paso, not Plymouth, held the first Thanksgiving," declared Peggy Boone of the El Paso, Texas, CVB. "In 1598, the 500 settlers led by Don Juan de Onate from Mexico to El Paso held a feast to celebrate their safe arrival. On the last Sunday in April, local history buffs re-enact the event at Chamizal National Memorial."

Another fun event is Chamizal's Music Under the Stars World Festival, held Sunday evenings June through August.

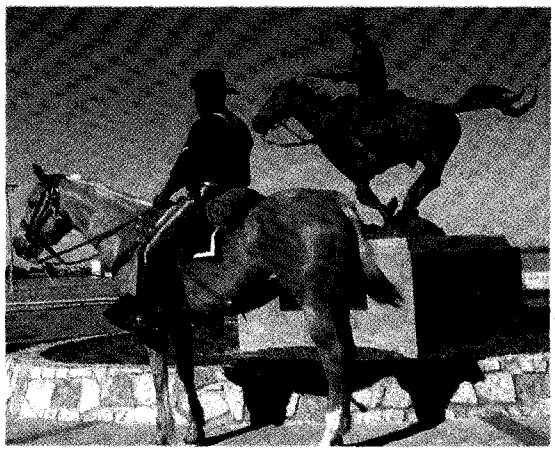
During my day trip to El Paso, I am confronted by menacing gunfighters, a sheriff and shady ladies at the Concordia Cemetery. One hombre is the spitting image of the infamous outlaw, John Wesley Hardin. He and other re-enactors from the Concordia Heritage Association are impersonating characters from El Paso's checkered past.

My next stops are the Catholic missions. El Paso del Norte (North Pass) was a key crossing in the Americas for Spanish gold seekers. Catholic priests followed and built a chain of missions 90 years earlier than those in California. The oldest is Guadalupe Mission (1659) at Ciudad Juarez—El Paso's twin city across the Mexican border.

A convenient way to investigate the region's international culture is to ride the "Border Jumper" trolley from the El Paso Convention Center—easy to identify with its sombrero-shaped roof—to downtown Juarez, Mexico ($11).

Nearby Fort Bliss was established in 1849. The fort's "Buffalo Soldiers," or black cavalrymen, fought Apaches and Pancho Villa. Today, the fort is the largest air defense center in the Western world. Adjacent to the Buffalo Soldiers Memorial at the fort's Robert E. Lee entrance, historian Ulysses Davis—astride his magnificent mare Mercedes at full gallop—punctures a line of balloons with his saber, exhibiting the skill of the black cavalrymen for me.

From June through August, the El Paso Association for the Performing Arts celebrates its grand history in the scenic McKelligon Canyon Amphitheater in the nearby Franklin Mountains, with songs, dance and pageantry titled "Viva El Paso!" El Paso's famous Star on the Mountain, lit since 1940, is on the south side of the Franklin Mountains.



***After exhibiting the skills of black cavalrymen, historian Ulysses Davis and his horse Mercedes rode by the Buffalo Soldiers statue at Fort Bliss.***

– COURTESY JOANN ROE –

To get out of the heat, tour El Paso's museums. At the Museum of Art, you'll find some pieces from the famous Samuel H. Kress Collection of European masters. The private Hal Marcus Gallery features bright Hispanic and tropical themes. Adair Margo Art Gallery is the exclusive representative of the late artist Tom Lea, a Texas favorite. The Centennial Museum, El Paso Science Museum and Tigua Indian Cultural Centre are other sites worth seeing.

For dinner, try the Edge of Texas Steakhouse of Jimmy and Bucky Bowen. Bowen is a business magnate but prefers to be known as a good cowboy. For romance, head to the historic La Hacienda, which has strolling musicians most nights. (Don't forget the margarita, as locals claim the drink originated in El Paso.) The titanic dome of Tiffany glass in the historic Camino Real Hotel is also worth seeing and as a bonus, you may rub elbows with a cattle baron or two.

**JoAnn Roe** is a member of Western Writers of America and Society of American Travel Writers, and has written 14 books.

*"Don't sell your mule to buy a plow."*

**- Old Vaquero saying**



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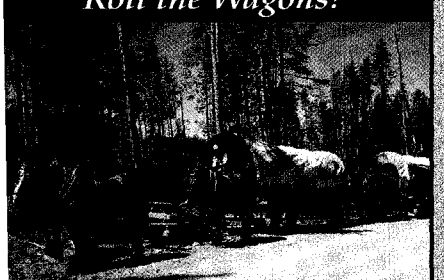

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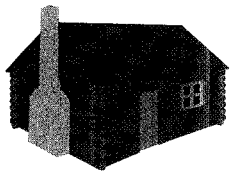

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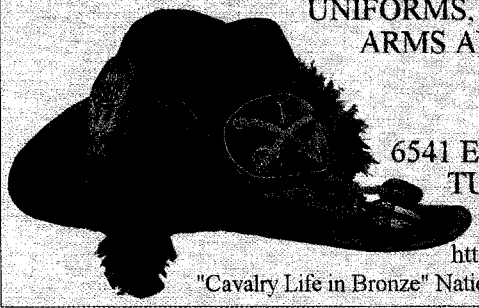

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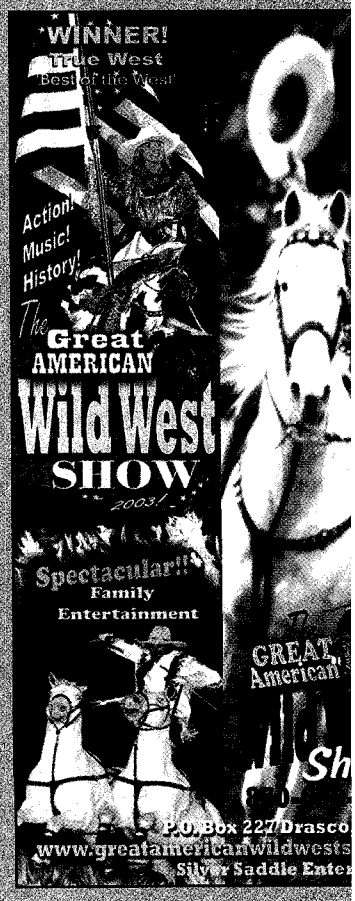


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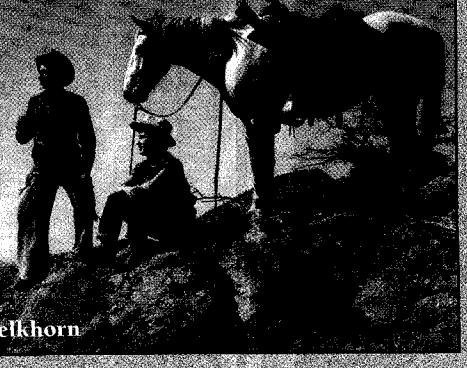

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BY CANDY MOULTON

# A Pineapple-Coconut Pie Kind of Guy

*Johnny D. Boggs cooks up Old West stories.*

Since third grade, Johnny Boggs has been making up stories. Of course for *True West*, he sticks to the facts. And as regular readers already know, he has a quirky sense of humor.

As familiar as you are with Boggs' articles, you probably don't expect him to tell you he wears boxers when asked to share some things readers don't know about him. (Or maybe you do.) Among other things he says about himself, "I make great chili, and an even better pineapple-coconut pie."

But there's more to this Southern boy, who was reared on a farm near Timmonsville, South Carolina. By the time Johnny was in high school, he had his future mapped out: "I'd major in journalism, work as a sportswriter and write fiction on the side, eventually quitting the day job to write novels full time."

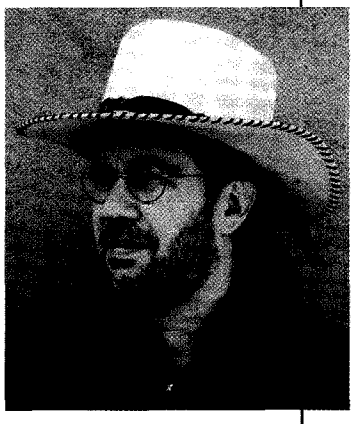
Oh, yes, and the job would have to be in the West.

After receiving his college degree in journalism, he landed a job at the *Dallas Times Herald* and later worked at the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*. In 1998, tired of the "weather, traffic and crime" of Dallas, Johnny half-jokingly suggested to his wife Lisa that she apply for a job in Santa Fe so he could quit the newspaper and write full time.

A couple of months later, they put the plan into action. Since then, Johnny Boggs has written articles for every major Western magazine, churned out solid, award-winning short stories and books, seen the country and charmed nearly everyone he's met.

Juggling fiction and nonfiction, and being a husband and now a father is a challenge. Johnny says his son Jack has brought "more interruptions [to my life], but I certainly don't mind those. . . . [He's] probably the biggest inspiration . . . the fear of having to get a real day job and missing out on watching him grow."

In the past year since he's had Jack to hold, Johnny's kept his fingers on the computer keyboard. He now has 21 books to his credit—with more in production—plus 27 published short stories, including his Spur Award-winning "A Piano at Dead Man's Crossing" in *American West: Twenty New Stories from the Western Writers of America.*



***Johnny D. Boggs often portrays the West in a lighthearted, humorous way.***

– COURTESY JOHNNY D. BOGGS –

Don't tell the highway patrol or Texas Rangers, but even when Johnny is traveling, his mind wanders the West. "The road inspires me. I turn off the radio and let my imagination go to work, developing characters, thinking up plots, figuring out transitions, sentences, things like that."

Boggs' books include *Hannah and the Horseman* series and the *Guns and Gavel* series, which contains *Spark on the Prairie*, a story of the 1871 Kiowa trial in Jacksboro, Texas. His newest titles are *The Big Fifty*, the forthcoming *Purgatorie* and a Billy the Kid story, titled *Law of the Land.*

One of Johnny's favorite characters is the Kiowa Satank. "He's a fascinating individual who can be villain, hero or somewhere in between. I've written short nonfiction about him, he's fictionalized in *Spark on the Prairie*, I've visited his grave twice, have read everything I can about him, and I've been toying around with the idea of writing a novel centered on him. . . . Of course, I would not have enjoyed meeting him alone in 1871." (See "Judgment at Jacksboro," p. 40.)

Nor I.

Now, Johnny, how about passing a piece of that pineapple-coconut pie?

**Candy Moulton,** like Johnny Boggs, can write nearly anywhere, from a tent to a wagon to her home office near Encampment, Wyoming. She has no idea how to make pineapple-coconut pie.

*"One reason a dog has so many friends: He wags his tail instead of his tongue."*

**- Old Vaquero saying**



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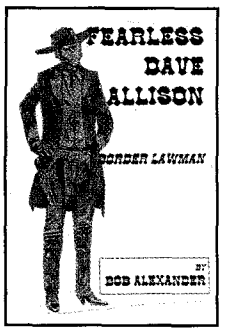
## FEARLESS DAVE ALLISON

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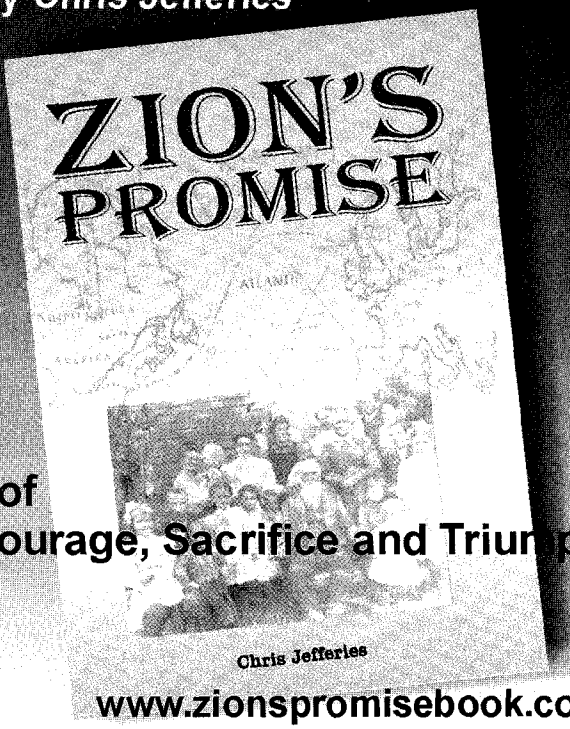


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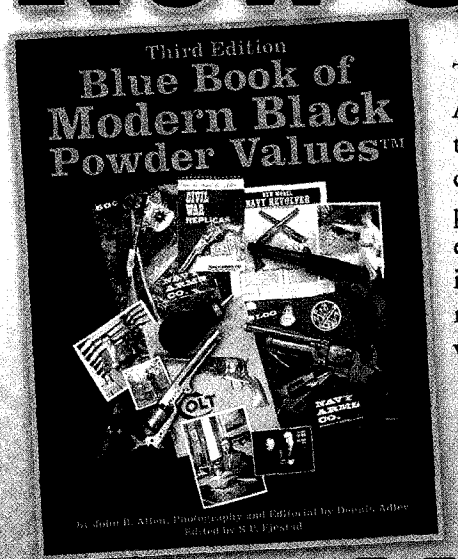


The new 3rd edition ***Blue Book of Modern Black Powder Values*** by John Allen with color photography and editorial by Dennis Adler. This popular title has also been expanded to an 8½ x 11 in. format, and contains up-to-date information and pricing on both new and discontinued modern black powder reproductions and replicas. An important feature in this 3rd edition is a section on proofmarks and factory markings, allowing you to identify the manufacturer and date on most popular reproductions and replicas. Also available by online subscription – please check our web site: www.bluebookinc.com.

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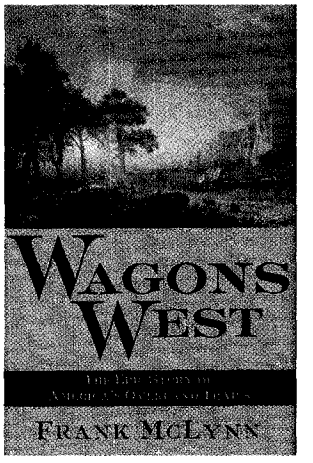
## NONFICTION

### WAGONS WEST

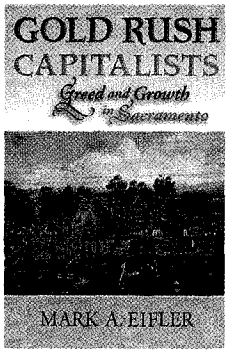
*FRANK McLYNN, GROVE PRESS, $32.50, HARDCOVER.*




Except for its poor index and annoying errors of personal and place names, this is an adequate retelling of the story of Manifest Destiny and our Westward movement. Subtitled, "The Epic Story of America's Overland Trails," it really concerns itself with the singular Overland Trail and the Platte River Route, which includes the Oregon, California and Mormon Trails. The book is not about the Gila, Santa Fe, Smoky Hill or other Western routes. McLynn also carefully examines companies such as the tragic Donner Party, bound for California in the 1840s. —RICHARD H. DILLON

### GOLD RUSH CAPITALISTS

*MARK A. EIFLER, UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO PRESS, $39.95, HARDCOVER.*

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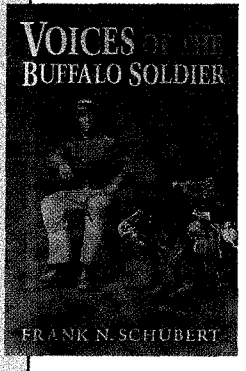


### VOICES OF THE BUFFALO SOLDIER

*FRANK N. SCHUBERT, UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO PRESS, $24.95, HARDCOVER.*

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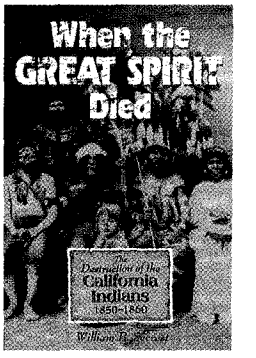
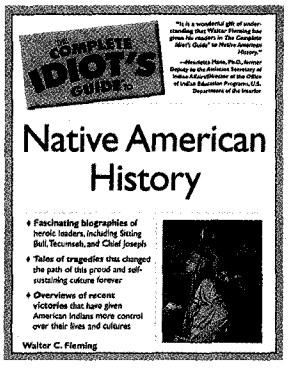
*WILLIAM B. SECREST, WORD DANCER PRESS, $15.95, SOFTCOVER.*




The West's Indian wars did not begin on the Great Plains but in California. From the gold rush until the Civil War, continual, bloody, guerrilla warfare was waged against California's Indians. Despite Indian commissioners, superintendents, agents and *rancherias* (reservations), extermination became the state's unwritten policy. Indians were hunted down by miners and ranchers, not army officers. The Indians were not without fault; they stole livestock and killed individual settlers, but the vigilantes responded with indiscriminate mass murder. Secrest carefully documents this decade without impeding his narrative of its tragic events. —RICHARD H. DILLON

### THE COMPLETE IDIOT'S GUIDE TO NATIVE AMERICAN HISTORY

*WALTER C. FLEMING, ALPHA BOOKS, $18.95, SOFTCOVER.*




Although the repetitive sentences may lead you to believe this is a book written for an idiot of the English language, ignore the urge to toss it. Once you skip the repeats, you'll discover a fresh Native American perspective that will enrich your understanding of Indian history. Of course, this book is not for someone actually versed in the culture: it's called the *Complete Idiot's Guide* for good reason. But anyone who needs a refresher course in Native American history would not be an idiot to pick up this book. (And that includes anyone who doesn't know Geronimo's Apache name—*Goyathlay.*) —MEGHAN SAAR



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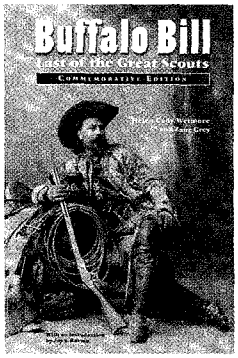
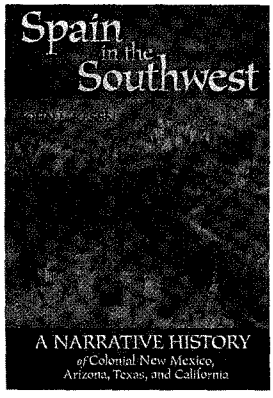



## BUFFALO BILL: LAST OF THE GREAT SCOUTS

*HELEN CODY WETMORE, UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA PRESS, $18.98, SOFTCOVER.*

This Commemorative Edition once again resurrects an 1899 classic relating the life and adventures of William F. Cody, better known as Buffalo Bill. The author was the sister of the frontiersman and showman, therefore much of this romanticized biography upholds the myth of Buffalo Bill rather than historical facts. Still, only a family member could tell these anecdotes of Western life and Buffalo Bill's exploits, and thus, the biased perspective does not lessen the book's value as a worthy addition to any library. Zane Grey's afterword is a definite plus. —CHUCK LEWIS




## SPAIN IN THE SOUTHWEST

*JOHN L. KESSELL, UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA PRESS, $19.95, SOFTCOVER.*

A borderlands scholar charts the "great swells" of the Spanish empire from Florida to Vancouver Sound, yet in spite of familiar patterns of encounter and warfare, this richly illustrated history challenges stereotypes. Kessell tells the stories of people who shaped the era, which demonstrate that Indians and Spaniards were equally "playful, cruel, loyal, and nasty." —CYNTHIA GREEN

# FICTION

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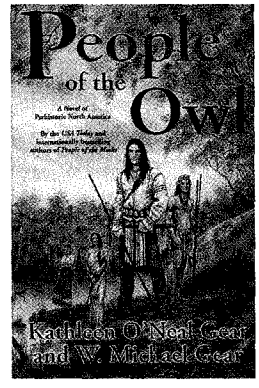


Travel with Mud Puppy as he becomes Salamander, a speaker for the Owl Clan at Sun Town. Mud Puppy struggles with the changes facing his people in this first American city, now known as Poverty Point, Louisiana. Meet Salamander, Pine Drop, Night Rain and Anhinga, who use power to achieve their goals and make choices that affect their tribes' and clans' future. Salamander is considered weak and inept by other clan leaders, but his vision is far greater. He knows that only wise choices will help his people survive the destructive forces massing against them. The Gears have penned a riveting story that takes you into the hearts and souls of early people. —CANDY MOULTON

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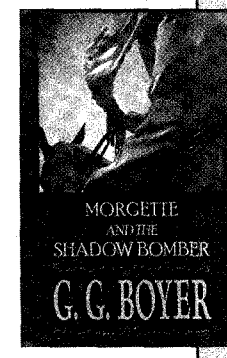


Summoned back from Alaska Territory to stamp out a series of deadly dynamite attacks, Dolf Morgette cracks the case through horseback detective work and the canny help of his Native American in-laws. Possibly inspired by Harry Orchard, who blew a Western ex-governor to Kingdom Come, Boyer has dealt his readers another explosive tale. —BILL GARWOOD

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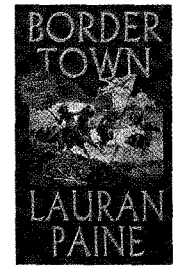


This action-packed tale of border town warfare weaves together Indian attacks and fights for survival in several twists. When border ruffians threaten the town of San Ildefonso, located on the New Mexico border, the townswomen take a stand. Soon, the maraudering raiders are in for the fight of their lives. A quick read on a rainy day. —LINDA WOMMACK

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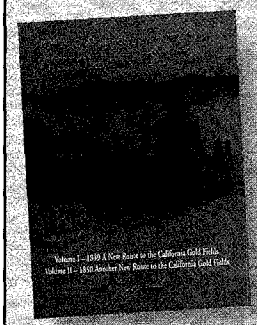

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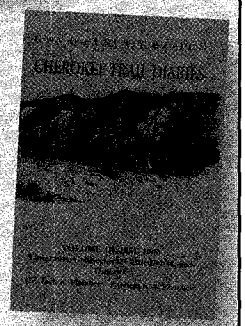

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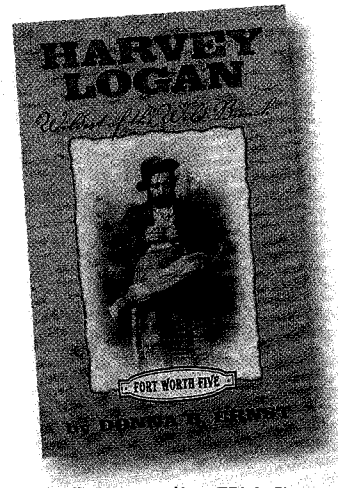


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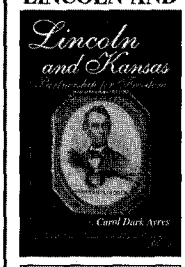


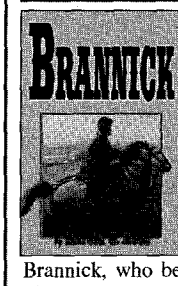


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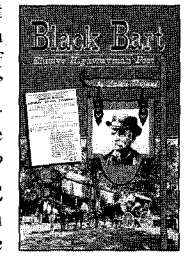


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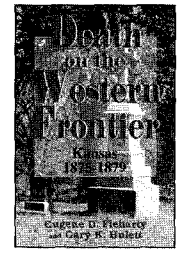


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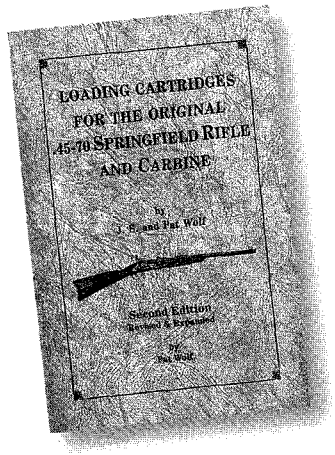


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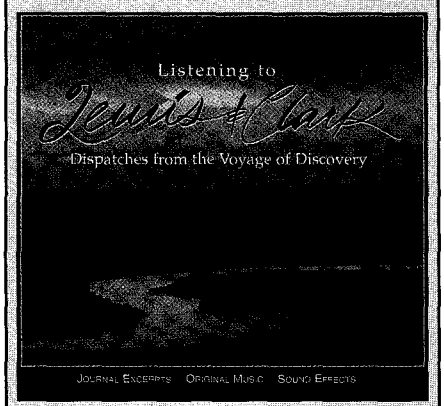


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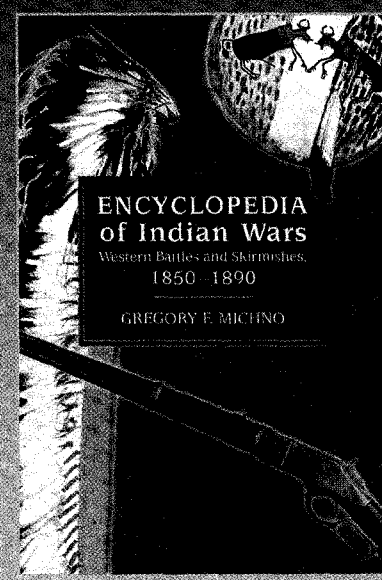


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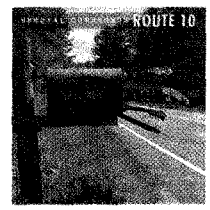
## ROUTE 10

### Special Consensus

*PINECASTLE RECORDS, 2002.*




Special Consensus is keeping bluegrass alive in more ways than one, whether it's traditional, gospel, country-flavored or swing. As its fourth album *Route 10* will attest, banjoist Greg Cahill's assembly of award-winning musicians performs bluegrass as it's meant to be played—with plenty of drive, tight vocal harmonies, spirited instrumental breaks and a bushel of enthusiasm. While the bulk of the songs are original compositions, Michael Martin Murphey's "Carolina In The Pines" is vocally covered by mandolinist Josh Williams and the traditional "Come Unto Me" gets soulful, gospel-quartet treatment. —GUS WALKER

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### Tish Hinojosa

*ROUNDER RECORDS, 2003.*

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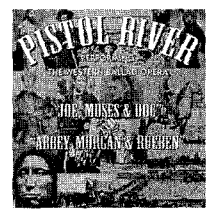
## THE WESTERN BALLAD OPERA

### Pistol River Band

*PARTHENON RECORDS, 2003.*




Don't let the word "Opera" fool you: this is one musical production that doesn't need a libretto to be understood. This epic saga of two 19th-century families is beautifully sung by the Pistol River Band. The tales make you want to hunker down around a campfire until the last ember dies. The CD is destined to become a cult classic as Pistol River breaks all the rules, creating a new genre that may leave traditional cowboy music in the dust. (The CD is nominated by AWA for Best Western Album, 2003.) —CORINNE BROWN



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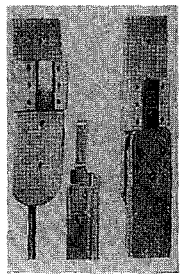

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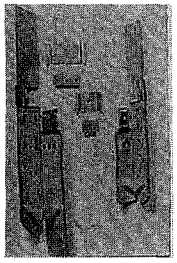

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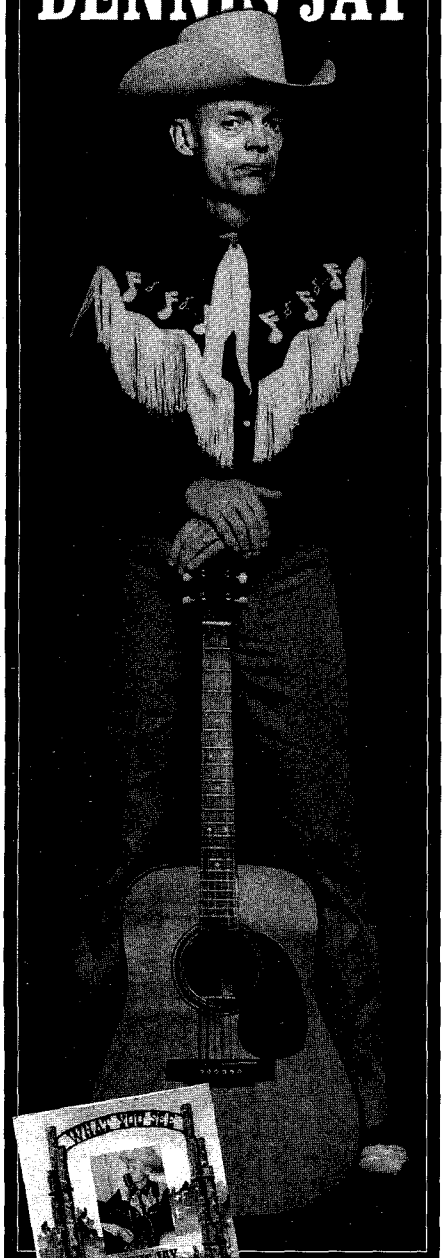

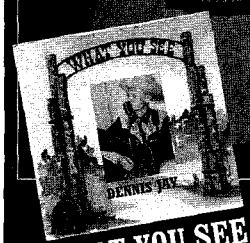


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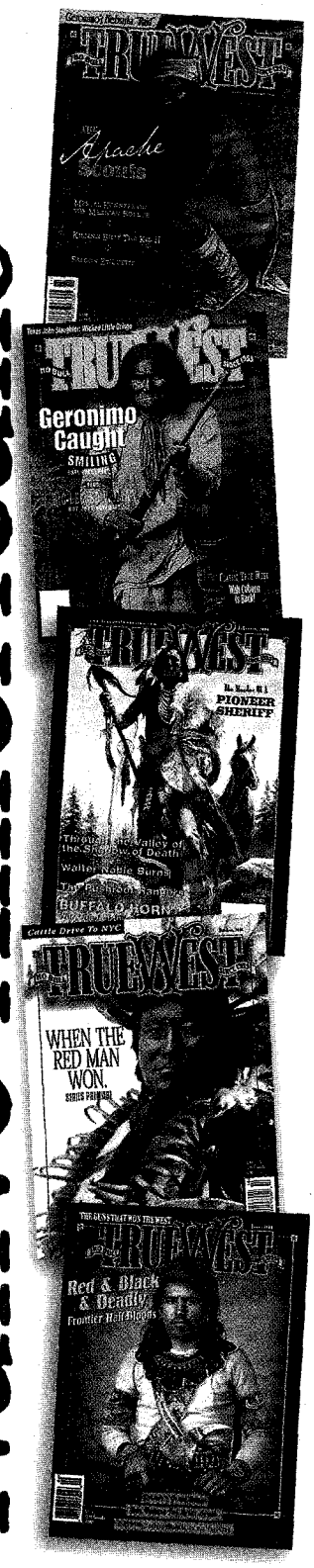


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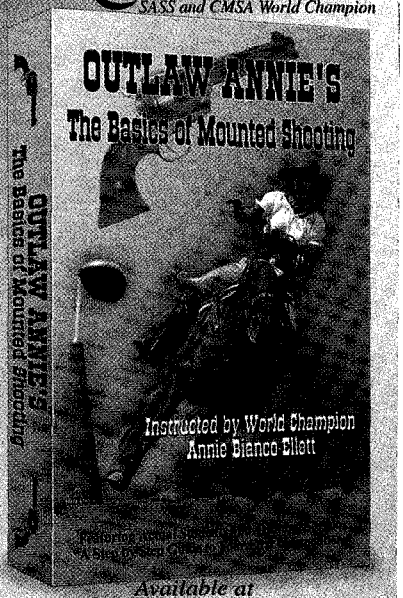


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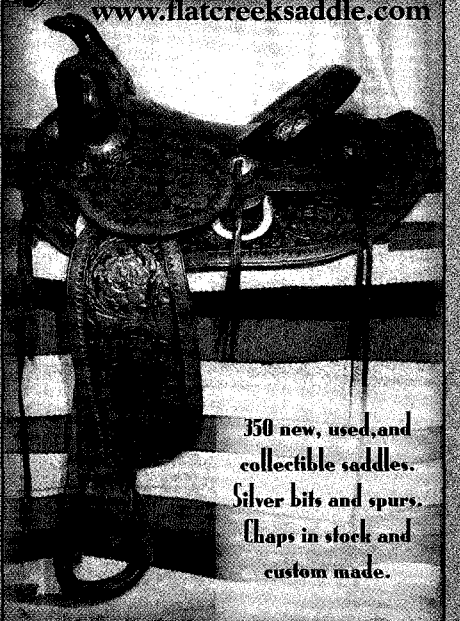

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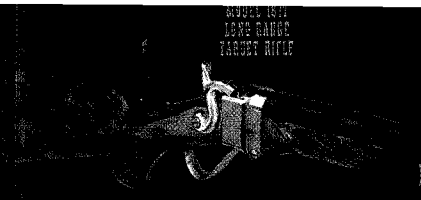

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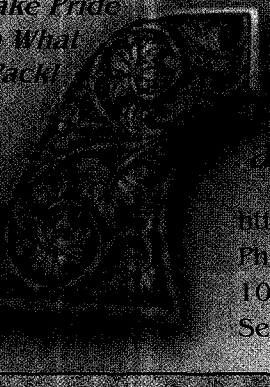

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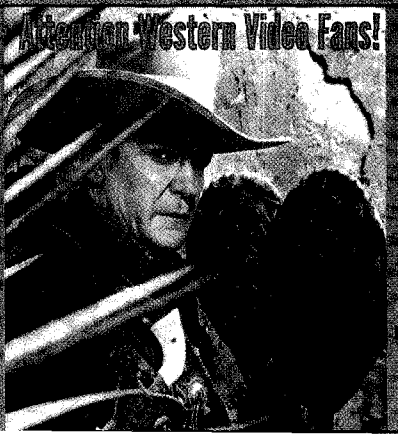

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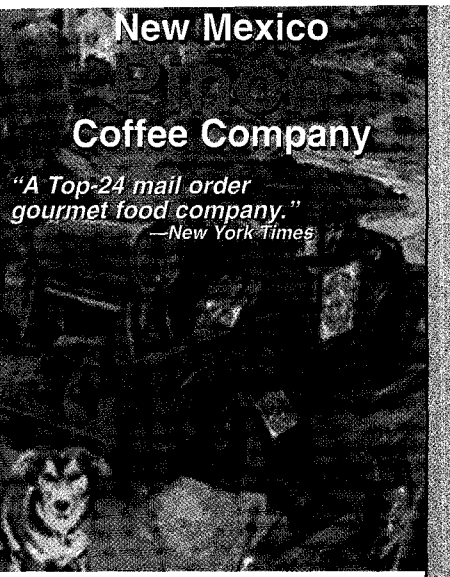
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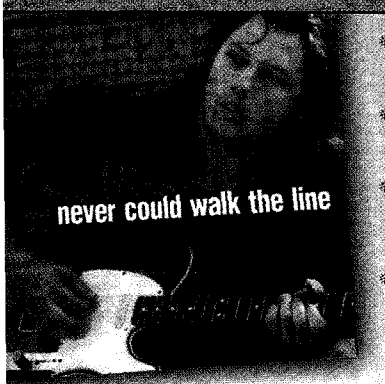
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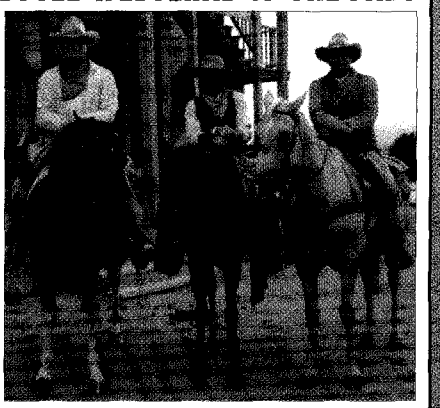

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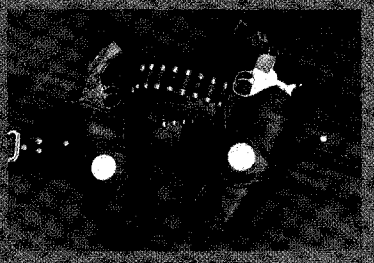

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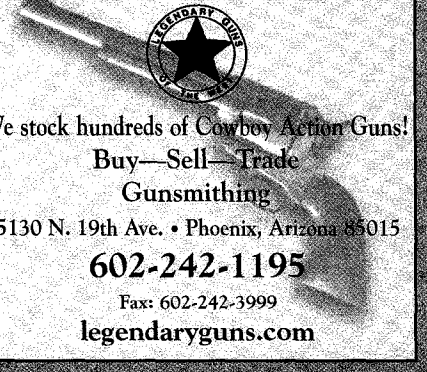

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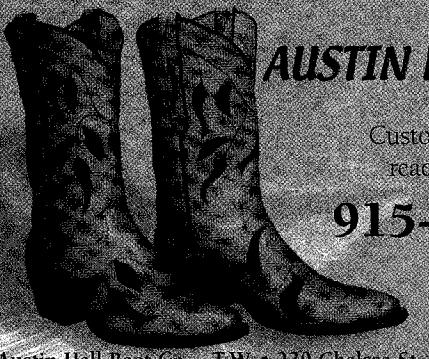

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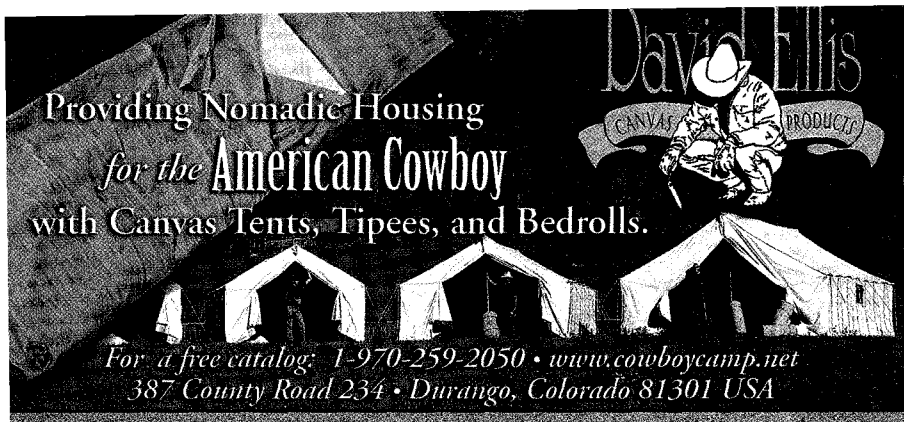

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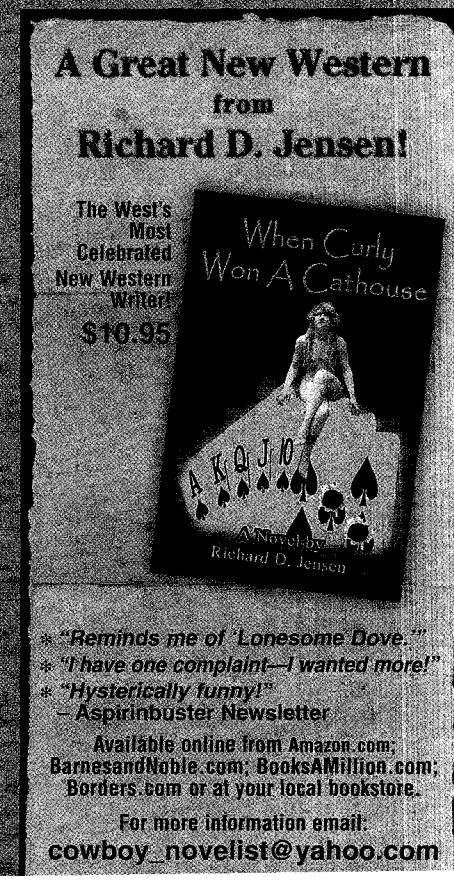

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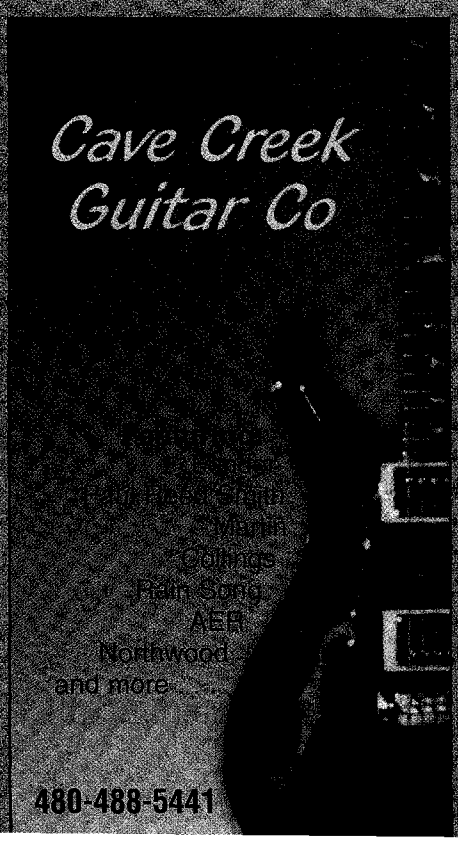
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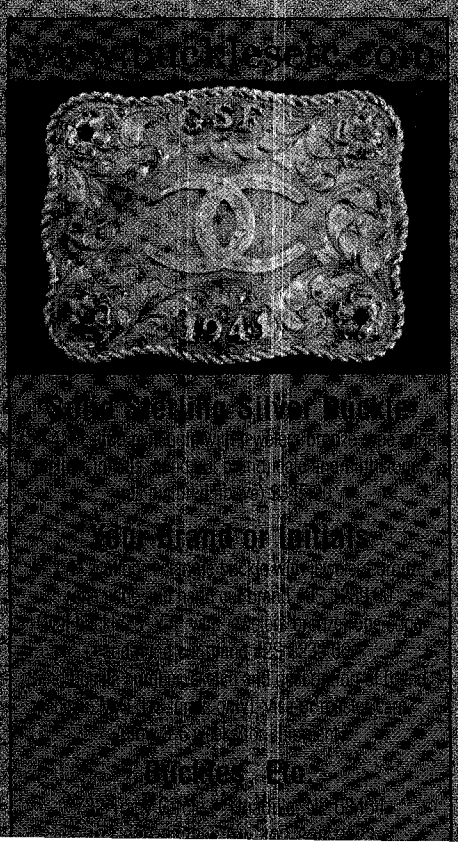
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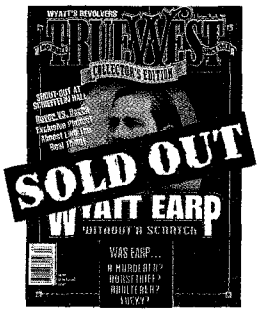
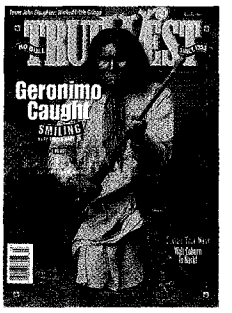



Feb./Mar. 01 **
Wyatt Earp

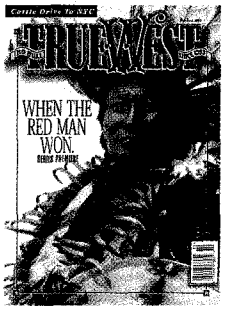



April 01
Geronimo

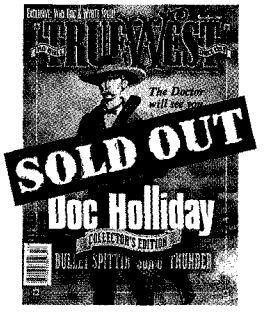
May/June 01 * **
Custer

July 01
Cowboys & Cowtowns

Aug./Sept. 01 **
Wild Bill Hickok



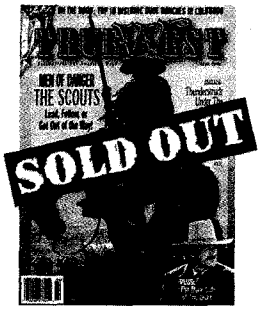

Oct. 01
Red Man Won



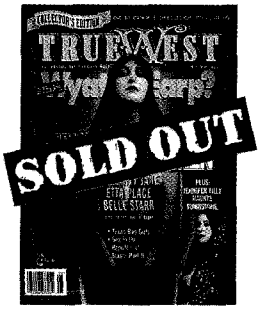

Nov./Dec. 01 **
Doc Holliday

Jan. 02
Uncommon Men

Feb./Mar. 02 **
The Alamo

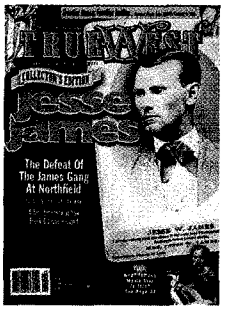



April 02
Scouts




May/June 02 **
Wayward Women

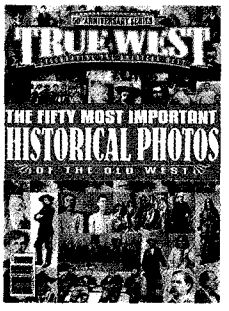
July 02
Texas Rangers




Aug./Sept. 02
Jesse James

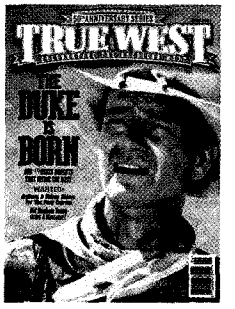
Oct. 02
Billy the Kid

Nov./Dec. 02
Butch & Sundance

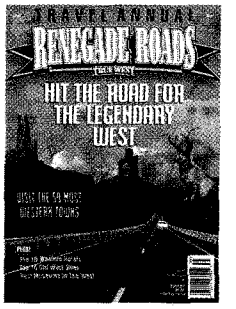



Jan. 03
50 Photos

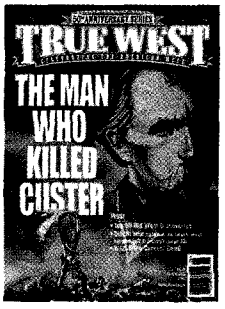
Feb./Mar. 03
50 Guns




April 03
John Wayne

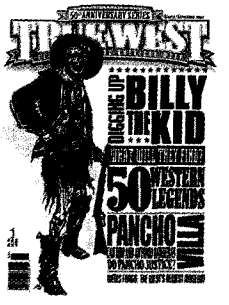



Travel Special 03
Renegade Roads




May/June 03
Man Who Shot Custer

July 03
Doc & Wyatt




Aug./Sept. 03
Billy & Pancho

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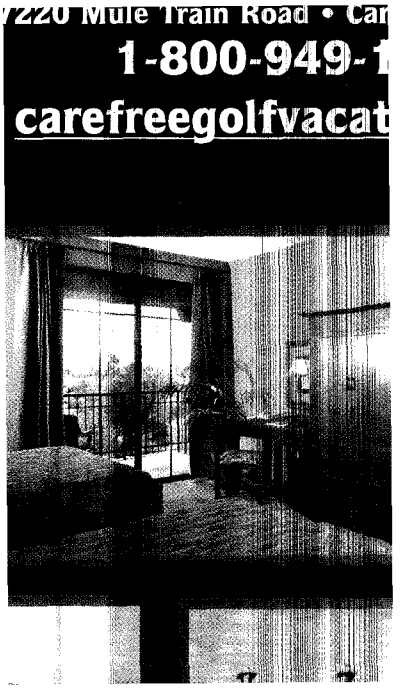


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**Q When was the first train robbery in America?**

*John Martinez*
*Tucson, Arizona*

**A** About a dozen members of the Reno Gang—headed up by brothers John, Frank, Simeon and Bill Reno—robbed an Ohio and Mississippi train near Seymour, Indiana, on October 6, 1866, looting the American Express car of some $10,000.

Later, the gang's Marshfield train robbery netted them $96,000. In terms of ill-gotten earnings for a single heist, the Reno Gang is ahead of the notorious James-Younger Gang ($60,000 in the Liberty, Missouri, heist) and Dalton Gang ($2,500 in the Lillietta, Indian Territory, heist).

*Frank Reno (above) and his three brothers are credited with pulling off the first train robbery in the U.S.*

– ALL PHOTOS TRUE WEST ARCHIVES –

**Q Are there any books or articles that examine the "shootist" personality? Was Clay Allison bipolar, schizophrenic, antisocial or some combination of psychoses? Or was he just overly sensitive?**

*David Goode*
*Bedford, Virginia*

**A** Not a lot is written about the psychology of gunfighters. Since psychology is a 20th-century science, gunfighters can be analyzed only in retrospect. Yet, the Civil War likely affected many Old West gunfighters, such as Clay Allison.

Allison was a taco and tamale short of a combination plate. During the war, he came home on leave in 1862 with a medical condition described as partly epileptic and partly maniacal.

On October 7, 1870, in Cimarron, New Mexico, he was part of a mob that lynched an accused murderer. Afterwards, Allison cut off the victim's head and placed it on a pole in Lambert's Saloon. He later abused the body of another lynch victim, dragging the corpse behind his horse. When a newspaper editor criticized him, Allison wrecked the newspaper office.

*Clay Allison in 1868, shortly after a self-inflicted gunshot wound in the right foot.*

Legend says Allison's dentist once pulled the wrong tooth, prompting Allison to extract one of the dentist's front teeth. The man's screams attracted a crowd before Allison could pull out another tooth.

Ironically, Allison died as a result of a wagon fall that fractured his skull on the front wheel.

**Q In the April 2003 *True West*, the Blazer's Mill shoot-out claimed to have 13 Regulators, however the list gives only 12 names. Who was the 13th man? Also, I'm familiar with all the names on the list except for "Dirty Steve" Stephens. Can you tell me anything about him?**

*The Desert Hills Desperado*
*Desert Hills, Arizona*

**A** Frederick Nolan, a foremost expert on Billy the Kid and the Lincoln County War, says the 13th man was Bill Scroggins. In 1927, Frank Coe said there were 13 Regulators, but in 1932, George Coe said there were 14. Various authors offer up Jim French and Tom O'Folliard as possible members.

Nolan says, "I know of no absolutely definitive listing" of Regulators who took on Buckshot Roberts that April day in 1878.

As for "Dirty Steve," he seems to be an enigma. We don't know where he came from or where he went. Nolan says Dirty Steve never surfaced in later years—not even in one of those "I knew Billy the Kid" features. The same goes for Bill Scroggins.

In June 1878, a grand jury indicted only George Coe, Charlie Bowdre, Fred Waite, Henry Brown, Doc Scurlock and Billy the Kid.

**Q What was Hiawatha's grandmother's grandmother's name?**

*Lim Hocker*
*Via the Internet*

**A** She was Nokomis, "Daughter of the Moon."

**Q I would like to know how male homosexuals were treated in the Old West. Were there whorehouses where men could go for male sex? And, are there any books on the subject?**

*Name and city*
*withheld by request*

**A** An Old West saying goes: "Men were men; women were scarce; and the sheep were nervous."

Homosexuality was a topic not openly discussed among Western men, so there isn't much written about it in primary sources. Which isn't to say it wasn't practiced, as men far outnumbered women in the West.

In 1849, San Francisco, men outnumbered women 50 to one. In 1860, Virginia City, Nevada, there were 2,206 men and only 30 women. That same year in Denver, only one woman lived among 1,650 men.

During the 1970s, some academic historians suggested the possibility of homosexuality among cowboys. This belief incurred the wrath of many



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Western historians like Dean Krakel, managing director of the National Cowboy Hall of Fame, who declared, "those scholars have no background and are demeaning the true cowboy."

In my opinion, homosexuality did occur but was strictly taboo and not practiced openly.

*Due to the shortage of women in the Old West, men sometimes turned to same sex companionship.*

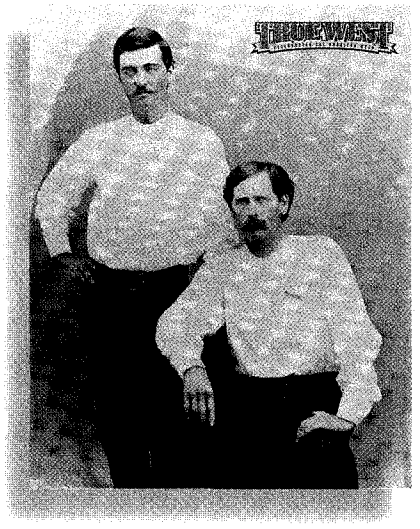
**Q The other day I was watching the movie, *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* and they talked about an Indian tracker by the name of Lord Baltimore. Was there any such person?**

*Randy*
*Via Fax*

A I called Dan Buck and Anne Meadows, experts on Butch and Sundance, and this is what they had to say:

"We've never come across a verifiable fact about an Indian tracker named Lord Baltimore; we've always assumed that he was a figment of [screenwriter] William Goldman's imagination. (That's why they paid him big bucks.)"

**Marshall Trimble** is Arizona's official historian. His books include *Law of the Gun* and *Never Give A Heifer A Bum Steer.* **If you have a question, write:** Ask the Marshall, PO Box 8008, Cave Creek, AZ 85327 or email him at marshall.trimble@sccmail.maricopa.edu

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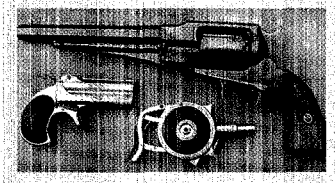

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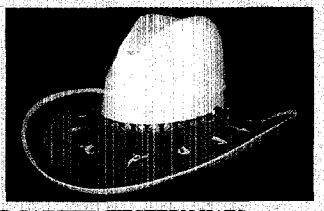

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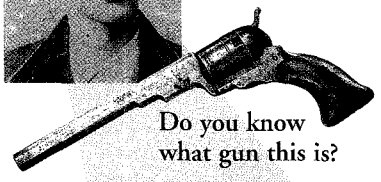

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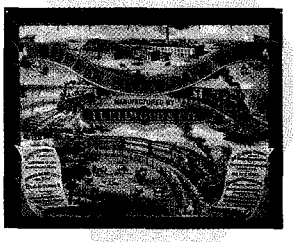

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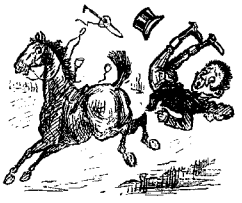
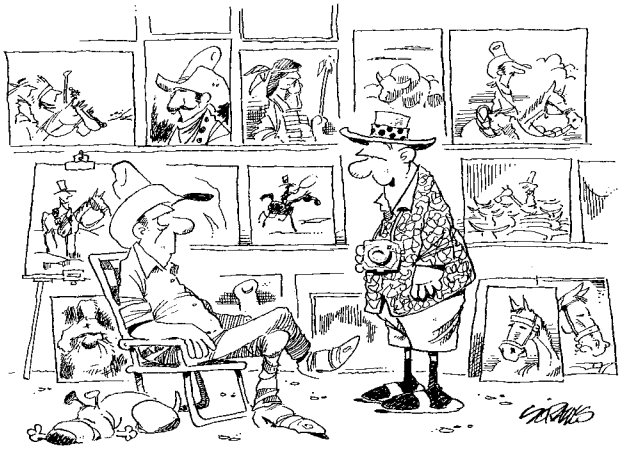


"Riding: The art of keeping a horse between you and the ground."
—*The London Times*



*"So, what kind of painting do you do?"*

**"Fashion is a form of ugliness so intolerable that we have to alter it every six months."**
—Oscar Wilde

"I hope if dogs ever take over the world, and they choose a king, they don't just go by size, because I bet there are some Chihuahuas with some good ideas."
—Jack Handey

# The Bull Pen

*True West* Sports Quiz
By Jack Connelly

(Answers below)

1. The best way to win a boxing match. (The reversed letters name the first part of a Western shoot-out site.)
2. Items found on a cowboy's horse, which also appear on the Indianapolis Colts' helmets.
3. What great American Indian football player and Olympic champion (later stripped of his medals) was of Sauk heritage?
4. Custer's foe at the Little Bighorn is the name shared by Buffalo, New York's former NBA basketball team and Bradley University athletes in Peoria, Illinois.

1. KO (knockout)-OK (Corral) 2. Horseshoes
3. Jim Thorpe 4. Braves

## HISTORICAL TWINS
TOO CLOSE FOR COMFORT

Frank Edwards, Burglar — Buster Keaton, Bungler



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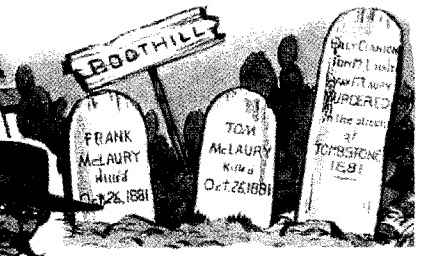
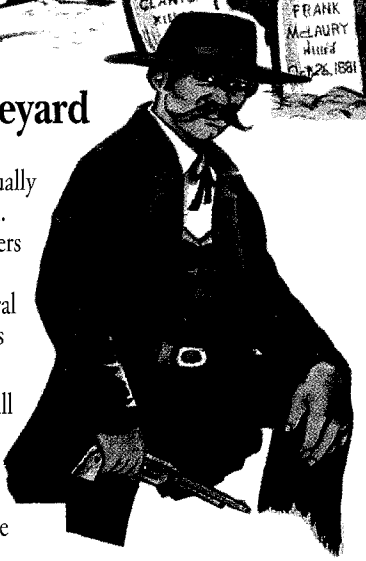



## Boothill Graveyard

When tempers flared in Tombstone the results usually were a burial in Boot Hill. Many notorious gunslingers are buried here including the losers of the OK Corral gun battle. The grave sites are authentic.

Visit the original Boot Hill Graveyard, final resting place of the good, bad and innocent. They died with their boots on, in the Old West.



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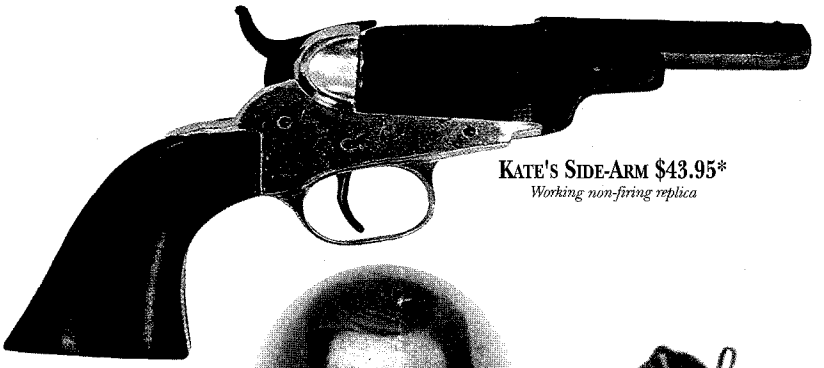

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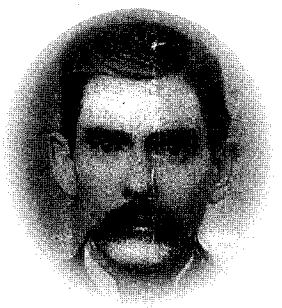

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